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INSIDE THE NHS

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J. K. Galbraith: My debt to Ronald Reagan

Plus: Christmas Books ● Gay policing

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New Statesman

New Statesman
14-16 Farringdon Lane
London EC1R 3AU
Tel: 01-253 2001
Editorial: 01-253 2003
Telex: 28449
Cables: Newstat, London EC1

©1983 Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd and contributors

Published and distributed by The Statesman & Nation Publishing Company Ltd

Subscriptions: Lesley Bridgmount, Cecilia Milton
Circulation: Liz Cooper, Tim Freeman
Display advertisements: Michael Roberts 01-253 2001
Classified advertisements: Laura Berryman, Stephen Mitchell 01-251 5487

Subscription Rates
Surface mail:
UK £32, Overseas £36

Air mail:
Europe £36, Middle East £41, Africa, India, South America £45, Australasia, Far East £49, USA $79, Canada $92

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NHS in crisis

Rarely in the last five years has conflict over – and within – the NHS been out of the headlines. Control over the NHS is crucial to government policy, while 'defending' it is becoming one of the great campaigning issues of our day. In a special 10 page supplement we provide facts and arguments to fuel the campaigns pp.I-X

Our debt to Reagan

J. K. Galbraith pays tribute to the man who, more than any other, has revitalised American liberals p.14

A certain smile

Bill Greenwell takes a sourish look at this Christmas's comic compilations and cartoon collections, while Martin Rowson draws another Scene From the Life of a Great Socialist p.19

Emblematic

John Spurling takes a fresh look at the achievements of Dufy p.29

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Improving the Quality of Life in London
Funds for Voluntary and Community Groups

As part of its programme to develop local community activities in London the GLC would like applications for funding from voluntary and community groups. The main areas of activity are:

Committee and area of work	*Closing date for applications (if any)*
Arts and Recreation—Arts organisations that attract a London-wide audience and cover a large catchment area.	**31 January 1984**
Community Arts Sub-Committee—Organisations participating in communication and distribution networks such as publishing projects, community bookshops, photo-collectives, independent film and video resources. Other art forms are funded if they serve a community of interest, such as women's groups, youth groups and the elderly.	**31 January 1984**
Ethnic Arts Sub-Committee—To support art forms of ethnic minority groups.	**31 January 1984**
Sports Sub-Committee—Groups whose aim is to encourage greater participation in sport throughout Greater London.	**31 January 1984** (for major capital schemes) **31 January 1984 and 30 September 1984 for all other schemes**
Ethnic Minorities—for Anti-Racist Year projects only.	**31 January 1984**
Greater London Training Board—Grants available for groups concerned with high quality training schemes in London. In particular those which demonstrate a demand for the skills in question or represent pilot or innovatory projects.	**None**
Housing—housing groups (except groups dealing with single homeless and hostels for which there is no closing date).	**31 March 1984**
Public Services and Fire Brigade—environmental, recycling and disarmament groups.	**31 January 1984**
Police—groups responsible for research into or monitoring of police activities and campaigning for police accountability in London.	**None**
Planning— (i) groups dealing with planning issues	**31 January 1984** (unless exceptional circumstances)
(ii) ecology groups	**31 January 1984**
(iii) community groups in Docklands	**31 January 1984**
(iv) groups within designated Community Areas.	**31 January 1984**
Transport—community transport schemes, transport for people with disabilities and pressure groups campaigning on local or London-wide issues.	**1 September 1984**
Women's—projects will particularly include childcare, health, the elderly, women's centres, women with disabilities, women as carers, technical resources, anti-racist activities and other projects which are within the Committee's priorities.	**31 January 1984** (unless exceptional circumstances)
Grants Sub-Committee—voluntary and community groups not falling within the above categories (e.g. groups dealing with the elderly/disabled, legal and advice giving and counselling agencies, etc.)	**31 January 1984**

NB: The GLC does not normally fund organisations that are the proper concern of other statutory bodies, e.g. the NHS, Borough Council Social Service Departments. Also the GLC does not support educational projects in London, that should be the responsibility of the ILEA, or in outer London, which should be the responsibility of the Borough Council's Education Committee.

To write for an application form and information brochure, which will give further guidance and contact points if you are not sure which Committee to apply to and details of the Council's criteria and procedures, apply to:

The Director-General (DG/GCU), Greater London Council, Room 508, The County Hall, London, SE1 7PB.

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New Statesman Vol 106 No 2749 25 November 1983

Campaigning for our NHS

OUR HEALTH SERVICES are not safe in the hands of this government. That fact is now openly established. It was kept from the people for obvious and cynical reasons before the general election. It was implicit in the secret long-term planning for public spending going on in Whitehall and the Tory Party, as was the more general Tory attack on the substance of the welfare state. For Mrs Thatcher and her Chancellors are determined to cut public spending's share of national output in order to make further cuts in income tax before the next election.

Now the first open steps in that direction have been made. Mr Lawson's autumn economic statement at the end of last week was carefully orchestrated to convey the impression that public spending was in danger of running out of control. He also showed how far he was prepared to go in the direction of increasing indirect taxes and charges on those less well off in order to give himself room to make future concessions to those at the top end of the income scale. The economically unjustified price increases to be imposed by government order on certain nationalised industries and on energy and the coming increases in the amounts of employees' national insurance contributions are blatant examples of class politics at work in the Treasury.

This is the context in which the campaign to save the NHS is gathering momentum. As with the campaign against cruise missiles during the first Thatcher government, the overwhelming likelihood is that the argument will be won. The real part of the campaign will be to change the policy.

The argument will be won because the government's case is so weak. Its only debating point is that in 'real' terms it is spending slightly more money on the health service than previous governments. But inadequate spending in previous decades is no justification for continued inadequate spending for ever. This country spends less on health and health services as a proportion of its national output than any other comparable country in western Europe. That is now showing in the quality of the health care that the people of this country receive.

It is a political disgrace that the country that invented the National Health Service and made it the envy of the world should have sunk to this condition. It requires a political decision once again to give health services the priority they require. Despite what Mr Lawson says, it is untrue that the country cannot afford it. In the first place, public spending is *not* rising as a proportion of national output. Even within existing totals for public spending and taxation, priorities should clearly be changed. A government that sets a higher political priority on preparing for tax cuts for the better off instead of on adequate finance for the health service is not a government of the whole nation.

IT IS NOT difficult to carry that simple central argument to the people. But for the campaign to have a lasting and constructive impact, it must go beyond a mere defence of the status quo in the NHS. For there are many aspects of the health service in urgent need of radical reform. The organisation and management of the NHS is not efficient. The democratic accountability of the NHS is effectively nil. The domination of the NHS by the consultants and the London teaching hospitals is bad for the workings of the system as a whole. The deterioration of the general practitioner service, particularly in urban areas, is a disgrace. The low relative priority given to preventive medicine and general medical care in the community ever since the founding of the NHS has been shortsighted. The general treatment of the mentally ill and the mentally handicapped remains a scandal. And more justified criticisms could be added to this catalogue.

The need, therefore, is for a campaign for both reform and proper funding. The creation of the NHS after the war was a political and organisational triumph. The impetus that launched the NHS carried it a long way during the first 35 years of its existence. What is required now is a positive political drive, born out of the resistance movement against the aims of the present government, to develop an NHS appropriate to the medical, social and political requirements of 1990 and beyond.

But there is a real danger that the enthusiasms that are going into the current campaign (or rather campaigns) to save the NHS will be fragmented, sectarian and ineffective. There are many political and other organisations with direct legitimate concern and interest – anti-Tory political parties, the trade unions involved, health associations. None, though, is well placed to provide the focal point for the sort of campaign that is required. It would be a mistake if the whole movement became narrowly associated with and led by the Labour Party alone, though it clearly has a dominant political role to play. The health service unions have been taking a union wide view of the NHS, but they must be concerned with protecting the interests of their members, for that is their purpose. None of the other organisations already involved in supporting the NHS has the resources required to mount a sustained and effective national campaign. It will not be easy to find common ground for all to fight on – but only that can save the NHS.

In our view, if the fight is to have a real chance of success, it must have a separate campaigning organisation, run by individuals for whom for the time being it is their only occupation, individuals with experience of and talent for the kind of high profile public crusade that is required. Such a campaign would need support in money and in kind from the larger existing organisations already engaged in the battle. But without specific direction and co-ordination, much money, effort and idealism is likely to be squandered. □

NHS Supplement

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US government fears Greenham leads the way

'I KNOW there are those who agonise about nuclear war, those who live in the shadow of great danger,' said Federal District Court Judge David Edelstein at a hearing this week on the lawsuit filed in New York by eleven Greenham women to stop the deployment of cruise missiles in Britain. 'We have no doubt that it exists, but that is not what is at issue here.'

Instead, Edelstein must first rule on a motion from lawyers representing the American government who want the case dismissed. The government claims that the Greenham women suffer 'only a generalised fear of nuclear war'. They are in no immediate danger and haven't shown the likelihood of potential injury or that cruise missiles could lead to a nuclear war. 'Ironically, relief (that) the plaintiffs' request', writes the US Attorney, 'could disrupt arms limitation negotiations as well as possibly jeopardise world peace.'

If the judge in his wisdom decides he will hear arguments on the legality of cruise deployment, the government is fearful of an avalanche of lawsuits over nuclear weapons. 'People who live near bases in the United States, or in W. Germany, in Asia, people all over the world could come to American courts and challenge decisions on deployment of missiles and arms and movement of troops', said US Attorney Rudolph Guilliano outside the court house.

The government also argues that Congressmen Ted Weiss of New York, and Ron Dellums of California, who have joined the lawsuit, don't have the power to challenge in court 'a decision in which they participated and were the losers.' Ann Simon, a lawyer for the British and congressional plaintiffs, told the judge that cruise deployment could deprive Congress of its right to declare wars. 'The courts have consistently reviewed whether the branches of government have exceeded their power.'

When Guilliano was asked later if Congress would have to approve the launching of a cruise missile he said: 'The President has the authority as Commander-in-Chief to take emergency action to protect the United States of America – by God I hope that's true – and if he has the opportunity to go to Congress then he can, if he doesn't, he can't.'

'There is no time to go back to Congress', says Congressman Weiss. 'One of the tragedies of the nuclear war is a steady erosion of all the constitutional safeguards we've got. And as I understand it, there may be time for consultation with the British government, but the decision is left solely to the Americans. After Grenada, the British may want to rethink that whole situation.'

A ruling on the government's motion to dismiss the case is expected in early December. A group of right-wing Congressmen have made a submission to the court in support of the US government, while over 100 groups are now supporting the Greenham women's suit.

Susan Jaffe

Newham trial – inside and outside court

MORE THAN 300 demonstrators, many of them school children, turned up at the Old Bailey on Monday 14 November to mark the start of the trial of the 'Newham 8' – only to learn that the case had been postponed again.

Newham's Education Director James Pailing revealed last week that he will be holding an investigation into the number of children who failed to attend school that day, and their reason for doing so.

The eight Asian youths were arrested on 24 September last year and charged with offences ranging from conspiracy to assault to actual bodily harm and threatening behaviour. The defendants are Vipun Pathak (20), Dalbir Johal (20), Kalbir Singh Khela (20), Gurjit Singh Hunjan (18), Kulwinder Singh Matwala (22), Uthayakumaramy Arumugan (17), Pervais Khan (16) and Bhubinder Sangha (17).

The case finally got under way last Thursday afternoon. The conspiracy charges against the defendants have been dropped. All eight in the dock now face charges of causing an affray. Johal is also charged with three counts of causing actual bodily harm, possessing an offensive weapon (a chrome welding bar) and damaging a police car. Khela is charged with causing actual bodily harm, and he, Hunjan and Matwala are all also charged with possessing offensive weapons. All eight plead not guilty to all charges.

David Hoffman

For the prosecution, Colin Hart-Leverton told the jury of seven white, two black and three Asian people, that the defendants had formed themselves into a vigilante group. There had, he said, been two earlier incidents at Little Ilford School, Manor Park, involving clashes between Asian students and white youths. But, he said, he was not going to go into the background to the case.

On 24 September, the defendants were gathered in a street when the fight broke out with three white police officers, all of whom were in plain clothes. At the police station, the defendants claimed they thought the plain clothes officers were white youths although, said the prosecution, the officers revealed their identity at the earliest opportunity. It was unfortunate, conceded the prosecution, that the first police car to arrive had been unmarked. It was only after the arrival of uniformed police with dogs that the arrests were made, by which time a number of police officers had been injured.

There have been daily pickets of the Old Bailey since the trial opened. Construction workers employed by John Mowlem plc, working on a building site opposite the Old Bailey, sprayed water and threw raw eggs at the pickets. The Newham 8 Defence Campaign has made a complaint to the Mowlem Company and to the GLC Police Committee.

Zubaida Motala

Black prisoner 'assaulted in Pentonville'

ACCORDING to Ace Kelly, chairman of Stoke Newington and Hackney Defence Campaign, Cirus Noor, a young black prisoner on remand in Pentonville prison, was assaulted by over 20 officers during a visit on Thursday 17 November.

Ace Kelly visited Noor that day. At the end of the visit, he says, prison officers were harassing Noor to end the visit. After some argument, a group of prison officers attacked Noor with 'fists and feet'. Kelly says that he saw Noor being carried out bodily from the visiting room. He also says that he himself was escorted from the prison by five prison officers. The Home Office has denied this story, saying that Noor refused to finish his visit, threatened a prison officer and was 'removed' by four or five officers. They specifically deny that any assault took place.

The following morning, however, Noor was visited by his barrister, Sarah Forster, who confirmed that he had 'extensive bruising on the body', 'bootmarks' on his body and a black eye. The Home Office said that Cirus Noor had been examined by a Medical Officer and that no injuries were found.

On Sunday 20 November, a bizarre twist was added to the story when a young Asian woman, Ruby Noorani, visited Noor – only to be arrested at the end of the visit. Ms Noorani says that she was arrested by five police officers at the gates of the prison, on the alleged grounds that she was attempting to take something illegally out of the prison.

Ms Noorani says that in Islington Police Station she was subjected to a humiliating body search, stripped naked and made to bend over for 'examination'. Nothing was found on her except political leaflets about the Newham 8 and other such matters. Ms Noorani says that a police officer, on seeing this material, said, 'If you feel like that why don't you go and join the women at Greenham?' After about one and a half hours, she was released without charge. Ms Noorani is considering taking action against the police over this incident.

Cirus Noor was due to appear at the Old Bailey on Monday 21 November on a charge of attempted arson at Bethnal Green police station. However, at the last minute, the case was taken out of the list.

Terry O'Halloran

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Welsh police under fire

SOUTH WALES police have been severely criticised by civil rights groups and MPs after four out of five defendants who denied charges in the Welsh explosives conspiracy trial were acquitted.

The Assistant Chief Constable (Crime) of Merseyside, Peter Rawlinson, has been called in to investigate allegations of violence, bribery and fabrication during the investigation.

At the end of the ten-week trial, all the defendants were acquitted of conspiring to damage or destroy property but Brian Rees of Lewisham was jailed for three years for possessing explosives with intent to cause an explosion. A sixth man, Dafydd Ladd, who pleaded guilty, was jailed for nine years on two possession counts and another man, John Jenkins, was jailed for two years in a separate hearing after admitting sheltering Ladd while he was on the run. Both men had previous explosives convictions.

Defendant Nicholas Hodges claimed during the trial that the police tried to get him to say that Dafydd Elis Thomas, MP for Merionydd Nant, was the brains behind the campaign. After the trial Mr Thomas said a police inquiry into the allegations was insufficient. He plans to ask questions in the Commons about the trial, including the cost, estimated at between £1 million and £1.5 million.

Plaid Cymru's President, Dafydd Wigley MP, has asked for talks over the length of time defendants spent in custody, up to nine months in some cases. The case has provided more ammunition for critics of the new Police Bill. Mr Phil Thomas of the Welsh Campaign for Civil and Political Liberties, a law lecturer, and Dafydd Elis Thomas have both called for interviews in custody to be recorded on tape or video.

In the trial, the evidence against three defendants consisted solely of statements they were alleged to have made voluntarily while they were in custody.

Amnesty International had an observer at Cardiff crown court and will be producing a report. Meanwhile all the acquitted defendants are seeking legal advice concerning possible action against the police.

The jury took 18 hours to return all the verdicts. Mr Justice Farquharson praised their devotion and more significantly, their 'contribution to justice'. In his summing up he said: 'The central decision you have to make is as to the honesty of the witnesses. The main contest is between the police and the defendants.'

In view of that, the verdict is being seen as a slap in the face for the police which will echo for a very long time.

Kieran Daly

MISCELLANY

Diplomatic talk

Charles Price II, the new American ambassador to London, gave a most convivial lunch at his private residence last Friday to no fewer than eight BBC journalists. He brought with him several high-level advisers on the Middle East, Central America and the Caribbean, whose purpose was to explain American intentions to the guests from the Beeb. But the ambassador himself was none too reassuring. On Nicaragua, he said that 'of course you can't rule out an American invasion'. Asked about British 'control' over cruise missiles, he replied, with heavy irony, 'of *course* we'd consult you'. As for the women of Greenham Common, 'they're such an ugly bunch – how can you take them seriously?'

Barber of Fleet Street

Stories continue to pour in from Gray's Inn Road about the new regime at the *Sunday Times*, headed by Andrew 'Two Chauffeurs' Neil. Last week we revealed that a TV preview in the paper's 'Screen' section had been altered to accommodate some insults against John Pilger. In his latest issue, Neil went one better, publishing a full-length attack on Pilger, written by one Frank Barber. Only last month the same Barber popped up on the *Guardian's* letters page, complaining about Pilger's obituary of Wilfred Burchett. Barber claimed that Burchett had lost a libel action in Australia, thus proving that he was a KGB agent. This was untrue: Burchett had won the case but, as Pilger pointed out, had to pay costs on a technicality.

It isn't only Pilger's stories that Barber likes to 'correct'. During the Brixton disturbances, when Barber was a sub-editor on the *Sunday Times*, he had to edit a report that both white and black youths had been fighting the police. He altered it, to allege that only black youths were involved (though this didn't appear in the paper). More recently, he rewrote the introduction to a piece on the Hitler diaries to make them seem more credible.

Barber isn't known for his expert knowledge of either television or Nicaragua – the subjects on which he attacked Pilger. So why did he write the article? 'You must speak to the editor of the *Sunday Times* if you want to discuss the article,' he told us. When we inquired if this meant that 'Two Chauffeurs' had asked him to write the piece, Barber put the phone down. During a second call, Barber attacked John Pilger again and accused us of having a mole at the *Sunday Times*. Quite untrue, of course.

Enterprising spirit

Andrew Neil's penchant for adding to his colleagues' articles is becoming quite a talking point in Gray's Inn Road. A couple of weeks ago the Atticus column had an item about David Hart, who went spectacularly bankrupt in 1975 but is now unofficial adviser to Mrs Thatcher. When Neil saw the piece he inserted the following sentence (which was duly printed): 'No real stigma should be attached to bankrupts of that period; a lot of enterprising spirits went down in the property crash of 1974.' As you see, 'Two Chauffeurs' is a fair-minded bloke.

Water sports

We ought not to leave Gray's Inn Road without revealing a touching little ceremony which takes place every Saturday evening, at 'first edition' time. Brian MacArthur, the *Sunday Times*'s deputy editor, confers on the telephone with Derek Jameson, editor of the *News of the World*. Each tells of any interesting stories which he is printing that week, so that the other can pursue them in later editions. On the Saturday before last, Jameson told MacArthur that he intended to print a sensational article about a former Cabinet minister who allegedly likes nothing better than being urinated on by young women. Jameson added that the story would be printed only in the last edition, so as to prevent any last-minute injunctions.

Frantic activity at Gray's Inn Road. MacArthur told his news editor, Anthony Bambridge, to get on to the story. Bambridge passed the task to one of his specialist reporters, who couldn't find anything to confirm the allegation. Misery all round at having missed such a scoop. And then the last edition of the *NoW* appeared – without a word about the cabinet minister or his proclivities. It would be nice to think that Jameson was simply keeping MacArthur on his toes.

Avoiding the issue

If you want to get on in politics you must cultivate the art of deliberately missing the point. Thus, when asked by Labour foreign affairs spokesperson Donald Anderson about the *NS*'s report on Britain's involvement in the sale of heavy water to Argentina, Mrs Thatcher said that the heavy water 'was not owned by the CEGB although at one time they had an option to purchase part of it. They are not involved in the sale to Argentina'. The facts, as we outlined last week, are that the CEGB had a *contractual obligation* to purchase three quarters of the material and that they *were* closely involved in the sale.

Big movie

Financiers on both sides of the Atlantic are quietly assembling a large pile of money which will, they hope, lure Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton into appearing together on screen again. But the enterprise may yet fail. The film is to be about the 'Scarsdale Diet case' in which the 'inventor' of the diet, Herman Tarnower, was murdered by his discarded mistress, Jean Harris. Given Elizabeth Taylor's

weight problem, this may not be the most diplomatic choice of subject.

Off screen

No newspaper has yet reported the fact that Channel 4 has just sacked two of its most senior staff. Fleet Street's silence may have something to do with the way in which Channel 4 announced the departures: it issued a press release last Wednesday which stated that three commissioning editors 'will not be renewing their contracts when they expire next year' – implying that they were all leaving of their own free will. Not so. Only one of the three – Sue Woodford, commissioning editor for multicultural programmes – had decided to leave anyway. The other two – Cecil Korer, senior commissioning editor for entertainment, and Paul Madden, commissioning editor for documentaries – were fired. C4's press release specifically mentioned Ken Loach's *Questions of Leadership* as an example of the type of distinguished programme which Madden had procured. It neglected to add that C4 has refused to screen *Questions of Leadership*, because of the film's left-wing politics.

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Strike splits a valley

IN THE TINY South Wales valley of Aberbeeg a strike has divided the community and set family against family.

For the last 14 weeks, 40 women and a handful of young men have picketed the gates of the Lefray toy factory on the Glandwr industrial estate. They used to work inside the factory, but after a one-day strike in August the owners of Lefray sacked 64 of their 74 workers.

The women, angry at the low pay and poor working conditions, had joined the Transport and General Workers' Union. When Lefray refused to talk to the union, they staged their one-day walk-out. Now, the pink elephants and teddybears that they used to make are being sewn by 100 new recruits – many of them the strikers' friends and relatives.

Dorothy Williams, who worked at the toy factory for ten years, now shouts 'scab' at her niece as she crosses the picket line with the others for the morning shift.

Williams had worked at Lefrays, sewing repairs by hand, for £1.38 an hour. (The rate went up to £1.49 in June, but the backpay was still awaited when the workers went on strike.) She had to stand for most of her eight-hour day.

'To earn a bonus of £2 a day, you would have to do 500 repairs. If they were Korean toys, it went up to 1,000, because we were told there was no profit to be made on them,' she says. The toys are sold in Boots, Woolworths and British Home Stores.

Her 17-year-old niece, Karen Williams, is now sewing up soft toys for £42 a week. She is not interested in her aunt's stand for union recognition – though she does object to the abuse she gets on the picket line. 'I'm quite satisfied with the pay. I've worked for worse,' she says. 'I don't know a lot about unions.'

Others doing the jobs of the strikers have been on the dole for years. One 18-year-old says that it is the first job she's had since leaving school. She thinks there should be a union, but wouldn't go on strike.

One of the four founder-directors of Lefray, Gertrude Lewy, says that there has been no difficulty recruiting new workers. 'If we had wanted another 100, we could have got them.'

There was a moment, in September, when it looked as though the strike could be settled. ACAS produced a formula – which was rejected, because Lefrays insisted that the strikers would have to sign new contracts of employment, and that there would be no recognition of years of service.

Robert Lewy, another of the directors, is now saying the factory would close rather than recognise the union. He is frank about the company's refusal to grant union recognition. Wages rates are set by the wages council; any improvements negotiated by the union would make the business uneconomic, he says.

The quiet hillside of Aberbeeg has been invaded by police, overseeing the mass pickets organised by local trade unionists. A couple of weeks ago there were 11 arrests. One of the pickets has had a cigarette stubbed out on his face by someone from inside the factory.

What has taken this mining community by surprise is the ease with which Lefrays has been able to recruit labour to take the jobs of strikers. But the Ebbw Vale area has an unemployment rate of 21.4 per cent, almost double the national average.

Geraldine Hackett

Tearing up the roads

THE DEPARTMENT of Transport is fiddling the figures so that juggernaut owners will pay less tax – in some cases, up to £1,200 less per vehicle. It intends to achieve this by the simple expedient of changing the way it calculates their tax assessments. Tax is supposedly levied according to the cost of repairing damage by vehicles.

Heavy lorries are the single most important cause of motorways cracking up, leading to the road works on the M1, the M6, the problems with Spaghetti Junction and those of the Severn Bridge. American researchers in the 1960s ran lorries over a test track until the road broke up. They formulated the 'fourth power law'. This says that the damage to the road is related to the fourth power of the weight of the axle. Thus, while a ten-tonne axle weighs 25 times more than a car axle, it is 400,000 times more damaging. All the car traffic on the M1 in an average day does less damage than one articulated lorry.

The tax burden of heavy lorries is calculated in a Department of Transport pseudo-scientific formula called 'road track costs'. Under the new DoT proposals, the share of road maintenance costs borne by lorries weighing over 3.5 tonnes would fall from 41 per cent to 33 per cent. Road maintenance in Great Britain currently costs £1.2 billion.

The DoT made these proposals in a consultation document issued at the beginning of this month. Although it issued a press release, it seems to have had a very restricted circulation list – and reactions must be into the DoT not later than 1 December.

One of the fiddles in the consultation paper is to relate the cost of a particular type of road damage ('haunching', or the damage caused to road edges where there is no kerb) to gross weight rather than axle weights. This reduces the assessed damage caused by a juggernaut from hundreds of thousands of times more than a car to approximately 30 times.

Tax is also assessed according to the space that a vehicle occupies. Back in the 1960s, it was judged that lorries use twice as much road space as cars. Since then, because of the increase in the number of very large juggernauts, the amount of space used by the average lorry has increased to 2.2 times that of a car. Now, the DoT wants to reduce this ratio back to two, seemingly for no other reason than to have a round number.

These changes may appear to be small; but their effect is large. Under the new method, a 38-tonne lorry would pay nearly £750 less in tax, and a 32 tonne lorry would pay £1,200 less.

Mick Hamer

Death by unemployment

RESEARCH in Edinburgh has proved beyond any reasonable doubt that there are strong links between unemployment and suicide. The long-term unemployed and those living in areas of high unemployment are far more likely to try and injure themselves than anyone else.

A paper by a Medical Research Council Unit at the Royal Edinburgh Hospital published last week showed that men in the city who had been unemployed for more than a year were about 19 times more likely to commit 'parasuicide' (deliberate self-harm) than the employed. Now provisional results from further research demonstrate that there is an extremely high correlation between rates of parasuicide and unemployment in specific areas.

The area that came out on top was Craigmillar, a peripheral estate where in 1981 almost one in a hundred people attempted to harm themselves and there was an unemployment rate of virtually 30 per cent. The other main areas plagued by these two problems included two more peripheral schemes, Pilton and Wester Hailes, and the inner city district of Holyrood/St Giles.

The work on long-term unemployment showed that nearly one in 50 men who had been without a job for over a year committed parasuicide. This was much higher than the rate for those jobless for less than a year. Work has also been done which shows a definite link between actual suicides and unemployment, but this has not yet been published.

The researcher responsible, Steven Platt, stresses that these associations do not prove that unemployment causes people to attempt suicide. It may be that other related factors, such as poverty and domestic stress, actually trigger the attempt. But it does prove that there is a clear relationship between unemployment and suicides. So when Under Secretary David Mellor in March this year said 'There is no reason to link unemployment with suicide', he was simply wrong.

Rob Edwards

Filipinos win right to stay

A RECENT Home Office decision to allow more than 20 Filipino workers, alleged to be illegal entrants, to remain in the UK, brings to an end one of the most successful immigration campaigns of recent years. The workers were the last of around 400 work permit holders, mainly resident domestics, who have faced removal since 1979. Although about 100 were removed, sustained activity by the Resident Domestics Campaign, supported by several migrant organisations and trade unions, prevented the removal of the rest.

The removals began in 1979 when the Divisional Court ruled that a woman who had not declared the existence of dependent children when she obtained a work permit had entered the country illegally. At the time, only those without dependent children were eligible for permits to work as resident domestic staff. This decision put some 300 women at risk of removal even though many of them had not applied for the permits themselves but had obtained them through employment agencies. The Home Office accepted that the agencies were often to blame but consistently refused to make any general concession.

A further 100 migrant workers, again mainly Filipinos, were threatened with removal as illegals because they were alleged to have supplied false references in support of their applications for work permits. Again, in many cases it was not the workers themselves who supplied the references but employment agencies in the Philippines.

In both cases it seems clear that the Home Office and the Department of Employment (which administers the work permit scheme) were aware of what was going on, and tacitly tolerated it, before they decided to act. Before 1979, for example, women who had worked for four years under the permit system *were* allowed to bring in their dependent children. The change of practice was part of the general tightening up of immigration control – including the considerable widening of the definition of 'illegal entry' – which took place in the late 1970s.

Paul Gordon

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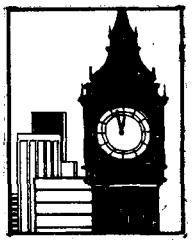

PETER KELLNER, Political Editor

Cruise, Pershing and the politics of peace

THIS WEEK the West German peace movement has experienced what the British peace movement had to live through just four weeks ago: a defeat over cruise (and, in West Germany, Pershing) missiles; but also something more hopeful – a real prospect that, by 1990, Britain and Germany may have shaken free from humiliating servitude to Washington.

The defeat, of course, is more immense and immediate than the hope; nevertheless the arrival of America's new missiles in Europe should not blind us to the significance of what is now happening on the Left in both Britain and Germany. After a week travelling in Germany, discussing the emerging shape of the Left with Socialist and Green politicians – both national and local – as the missiles issue approached its climax, I found that at one level the evolution of the Left in Britain and Germany is remarkably similar; but at another, perhaps ultimately more important level, significant differences emerge.

The similarities are fairly straightforward. In the late 1970s, when the question of cruise missiles first arose, both countries had left-of-centre governments (and, in both cases dependent for survival on support from a minority of centrist MPs). Both James Callaghan and Helmut Schmidt strongly supported Washington's nuclear strategy.

Callaghan's government fell three years before Schmidt's; and the running argument as to whether Labour would have deployed cruise had it remained in power can never be finally resolved. The crucial point here is that when the issue first arose, Labour's leadership acted as complaisant partners with Bonn and Washington and not as principled critics of the new missiles. Whatever Callaghan's precise intentions then, the Labour Party in opposition has moved to a clear and – to a quite remarkable extent – united policy; cruise is wrong, increases danger, should not have been deployed, and must be removed as soon as possible.

During its year in opposition in West Germany, the SPD has travelled much the same journey, culminating in its special conference last weekend, when Schmidt found himself as isolated on defence in the SPD as Callaghan now is in the Labour Party. For the first time since 1945 both parties take an unambiguously different view of defence strategy from both Washington and their own governments.

At the same time both Labour and the SPD remain firmly pro-NATO parties. Neutralists exist in both, but are in a clear minority. The peace movements in the two countries now have the support of the main left-of-centre parties for the immediate nuclear issue, but not for any longer-term ambition of removing Britain or Germany from a Washington-led, nuclear-based defence system.

IT IS AT THIS point that the similarities and the differences begin. In Britain 'pure' peace movement policies have no organised, independent parliamentary outlet. To be sure, they have supporters among Labour MPs; but come a new Labour government in the late 1980s or early 1990s they will have little bargaining power.

In Germany the prospects are different. Through the Greens, the peace movement does have a separate voice both in the Bundestag in Bonn and in most of the regional Land parliaments. It is impossible to mistake them. They are, on average, some 15 years younger than the representatives of the traditional parties. SPD and CDU members wear suits, ties and short hair-cuts: the Greens sport open-necked shirts and long hair. Ten of the 28 Greens in the Bundestag are women – a higher proportion, I believe, than in any other significant parliamentary party in the western democracies.

The rise of the Greens parallels the rebirth of our peace movement; the difference is that whereas our electoral system is designed to keep minority groups out of Parliament – except as a voice inside a larger party – Germany's electoral system decrees that once any political party achieves five per cent support it enjoys the right to representation in line with its support. In March this year the Greens won just under six per cent of the votes, and now have just under six per cent of the members of the Bundestag.

For the time being the fate of the Greens may seem academic: a sort of exercise in political anthropology. After all, Chancellor Kohl's CDU-FDP coalition is most unlikely to be displaced before the end of its four-year term.

But what then? The Greens exist and to a degree flourish because they have attracted support from people who find the SPD too willing to sacrifice both the environment and their principles to the expediencies of political power and economic growth. By any conventional test the Greens reside at a point to the left of the SPD; but the Greens are not a conventional party and it would be wrong to place them on any routine ideological scale. Like our own smaller Ecology Party the Greens are more concerned with conservation and decentralisation than with anything most of us would recognise as socialism.

The problem that the Greens pose for the SPD can be summed up by the following alternative scenarios for the next Bundestag elections. Let us assume that the CDU-FDP coalition wins 47 per cent of the vote. On one scenario the SPD wins 48 per cent and the Greens 3 per cent. The Greens fall below the 5 per cent threshold, lose all their seats in the Bundestag, and the coalition remains in power.

On the second scenario the SPD wins 45 per cent and the Greens 6 per cent. The Greens keep their seats and, together with the SPD, can outvote the CDU and FDP.

Which of these two outcomes, I asked a number of SPD politicians, would they prefer – the chance to do a deal with the Greens, with both problems and opportunities this would involve; or the effective electoral death of the Greens, the price of which would be four more years of opposition for the SPD? This kind of issue – there are plenty of other ways in which the dilemma can be posed – worries and divides the SPD. It wishes the Greens had never taken off; now that they have, it may be unable to govern without them.

And anyway, it is not simply a theoretical issue for 1987. Last week the Greens and the SPD started talking to each other to see if they could work in partnership to govern the Land parliament in Hesse, a diagonal wedge of Germany from Frankfurt and the Rhine to the East German border. Under Germany's federal system, Land parliaments have considerable power; Hesse, for example, has an annual budget of £6 billion, which is three times the budget of the G.L.C.

Last year, Land elections in Hesse produced a deadlocked result. Fresh elections were held this September. Holger Borner, the local SPD leader, announced ahead of the new elections that he would 'never' do a deal with the Greens. As ever he had forgotten the first rule of politics: never say 'never'. The new elections gave 47 per cent to the CDU and FDP, 46 per cent to the SPD and 6 per cent to the Greens. Again: deadlock – but this time nobody has the stomach for another caretaker administration and yet further elections.

So in Hesse, for the first time in West Germany, the Greens may be about to share in power at Federal or Land level. For a party born out of a rejection of traditional post-war German politics and nurtured on the purity of its causes, the need now to trade in the grubby compromises of power carries its own enormous risks and tensions. Unless we are all blown to pieces first, the future for both the British and German peace movements may hold some surprises and important lessons. Watch the Greens; and watch Hesse. □

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N. IRELAND

The horror of Darkley

Mary Holland explains why the attack on protestants at prayer has brought civil war much nearer

ROBERT BANE farms 40 hard, hilly acres in the rough and unrewarding countryside of South Armagh. He has been pastor of the Pentecostal Gospel Hall situated on a bleak hilltop outside the village of Darkley for the past 17 years.

Most of his congregation are like himself, small farmers getting a sparse living from land that is only fit for grazing sheep and a few cattle. Last Sunday, of the 70 or so of them gathered in the prefabricated hall for evening service, more than 20 were children under 14. One was a baby in a carry-cot. According to eyewitnesses, they had just begun singing Hymn 141 from *Songs of Redemption* when the two gunmen burst in, opened fire, killed three of them and injured seven more.

They were attacked because they were Protestants, gathered at prayer without any means of defending themselves. It is impossible to convey the horror and pain which this latest incident in the long litany of Ulster's sorrows has caused across the whole community. Ireland is a country where almost 90 per cent of the people, Catholic and Protestant, still go to church on Sunday. In places of worship one is always struck by the numbers of children, how naturally their noise is taken for granted. There is hardly a parent in Ireland who how not been forced to think, however briefly, of what it might be like next Sunday – at mass or divine service – if the scene in the Mountain Lodge Pentecostal Hall were recreated in his or her church.

There is a real feeling that a new milestone has been passed on a road that leads only God knows where. Up to now in Northern Ireland's past 14 years of violence it has almost always been possible to put a political interpretation of some kind on each individual murder, to give some rational motive not only to the killers, but to the communities who support their aims and no longer feel guilty about their deeds.

The Irish are not, of course, unique in seeking to put a political gloss on the pursuit of politics by violent means – as those who gloried in the sinking of the *General Belgrano* might do well to remember. But for many people even in Ireland this careful differentiation between kinds of killing is an obscenity almost as hard to accept as the political realities that underly it. Last week I was taken bitterly to task in a letter to the *New Statesman* by an Ulster Protestant who found my reporting the political strategies of Sinn Fein deeply offensive at a time when the IRA was still killing Unionist politicians. This article is written at a time of far greater communal bitterness and grief and I have to say that it is not meant to offend, only to try to explain.

To comprehend how ordinary people on both sides of the community in Northern Ireland can now tolerate so much killing, one must try to understand that for many Catholics it *does* make sense that men are gunned down, or blown to bits, because they are policemen, or off duty members of the Ulster Defence Regiment, or judges – or what the Provisional IRA used to call 'part of the British war machine'. If my critic is honest, he will probably admit that on the Protestant side few tears are shed for a person shot because he or she is thought to be a 'Republican activist', or has a brother in the IRA, or once organised a protest during the Hunger Strike. In one way such logic provides the comforting illusion that individuals have a choice and that, if they do not get involved with what is going on around them they may escape harm. In this way the deteriorating situation has, for the most part, until now still stopped short of what everybody fears – a time when Catholics get killed simply because they are Catholics and Protestants simply because they are Protestants.

It has got very close to that on several occasions in the past when there have been spates of tit for tat sectarian killings. The county of Armagh has a long list of such incidents, some of them even more horrifying in objective terms than last Sunday's attack. The community has always managed to step back from the abyss and that may happen again this time. But the symbolism involved in murdering people at their prayers, particularly potent in Ireland and surely calculated, has made the possibility of civil war seem suddenly a great deal more real.

IN THIS context the political fallout, while necessarily important, is unlikely to be the most pressing worry on James Prior's mind. Both Unionist parties have come on strong with demands for a whole range of security measures, including internment, which they and the Northern Ireland Secretary know they are not going to get. The future of the Belfast Assembly remains in doubt while the Official Unionists refuse to go back, but the likelihood is that they will return. They cannot afford to have Dr Paisley play the responsible politician and say that they killed off Northern Ireland's last chance of a devolved administration.

Of much more immediate concern are the repercussions which last Sunday's events are likely to have on the paramilitary organisation on both sides. Protestant groups like the UDA will come under intense pressure to kill Catholics, preferably known Republicans but failing that almost any Catholics, on the grounds that they are all IRA supporters and that the only way to wean them away from terrorists is a sharp, sharp bout of counter terror. If there has been one consistently hopeful factor in Northern Ireland over the past decade it has been that the Protestant community has resisted the temptation to go down that road, but then it has never experienced anything quite like last Sunday.

On the Catholic side the situation has been complicated, and made possibly more dangerous in the short term by the emergence of a new political leadership in the Provisionals. If last Sunday's attack on Robert Bane's congregation was about anything other than hate, it was to serve notice on Gerry Adams and others who would move Sinn Fein along a *political* path that there will always be people willing to do anything to destroy that path. At the moment the Gospel Hall killings are attributed to the INLA, or a front for it. Too much media attention has been paid to Dominic McGlinchey. There is always a temptation in these situations to look for one person whose removal would miraculously bring peace. There are, in fact, severely conflicting views of McGlinchey and of his importance, but it would be a tragic oversimplication of the present situation to imagine that if one man was apprehended the risk of attacks on defenceless Protestants would disappear.

EVER SINCE Sinn Fein opted for electoral politics, the INLA has cost the Provos dearly on the political front. Some people argue that Sinn Fein would almost certainly have won another Westminster seat were it not for INLA's violence during the election campaign. There must be a very strong temptation now for the Provisionals to 'take on' the INLA in a bloody shoot out that could spread across the border to the South.

While the spectacle of Republican gunmen killing each other would be unlikely to dismay Protestants, it could exacerbate an already dangerous situation. For the Provisional leadership knows that some members of the IRA do not share the enthusiasm for constitutional politics which has taken a hold on Sinn Fein. They are deeply suspicious of Gerry Adams's recent speech in Dublin which implied that in future the IRA's strategy should be for its campaign to be seen merely as 'a symbol of our people's resistance'. Some have already defected to the INLA and others could do so in the future.

All this will make little difference to those who mourn the victims of last Sunday's attack on the Darkley Pentecostal Hall, or to those who bravely keep saying they have no bitterness against 'the other side' and try desperately to cling to that belief. They are some of the elements which make Ireland a more dangerous place today than it was a week ago and journalists, like politicians, must take account of them. □

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BRITISH TELECOM

Mass sacking at the top

Caroline Berman reveals management plans

AS THE GOVERNMENT pushes its Bill to privatise British Telecom through Parliament, it is becoming clear that the board and senior management of BT are planning the most radical changes in the way in which the organisation is run.

The centrepiece is a report by a special 'task force'. It has been masterminded by Iain Vallance, managing director of BT's Inland Division and a BT board member. The report was given to the BT board about two weeks ago and is still being considered. The task force is made up of a handful of BT's more forward thinking managers and has employed an outside company, Logica, as its computer consultants. Hundreds of managerial jobs and thousands of manual and clerical jobs would go in the reorganisation that is being planned. So far the main trade unions involved in BT – POEU, SCPS and UCW – have little or no inkling of what is in store for them in a privatised future.

BT currently divides the country into 61 areas for management purposes. These management areas are grouped into 12 regions and served by 13 BT computer centres. Under the plans that are being studied, all these BT activities would be reorganised into 28 areas, served by 28 computer centres. The 12 regional organisations would be completely abolished. The aim is to streamline management and improve relations with BT customers. The result would be substantial reductions in managerial jobs. BT has already begun the task of slimming its managerial staff totals. (Earlier this year a BT executive threw himself out of a top floor window at its Gresham Street office on hearing that he had been made redundant.)

At the same time, the introduction of new computerised, microchip-based telephone exchanges – the System X – will eventually reduce the number of BT's key trunk switching centres from 380 to 60. These new exchanges will only need 10 per cent of the maintenance engineers currently required on the existing electro-mechanical exchanges. The new mega-exchanges can handle many times the traffic of present exchanges. Faults on the line in these exchanges will be dealt with remotely by central maintenance control units. BT recently announced that it would double the rate of introduction of the new exchanges. As a result, over the next four years the new systems will cover 1,750,000 lines.

Earlier this month the Post Office Engineering Union voted to boycott any further introduction of System X until staffing levels for the new exchanges have been agreed. This decision could hold at least until the POEU annual conference meets again next June. In the Manchester area engineers had already taken this action two months ago. System X exchanges are built up and extended in modules, like building blocks. Lol Williamson, secretary of the Manchester branch, says simply: 'At the stage where our lads take over from the contractors (GEC and Plessey), they just refuse to do the interconnection work'. It is estimated that the full introduction of System X could destroy up to 45,000 jobs.

BUT, IF THE UNIONS understand the implications of System X, they are only just beginning to grasp the implications of the work of the special task force over the last six months. It has been working on what has come to be known as the 'front office system'. This is based on a plan to link all BT's customer and management information to a single computer system. Any telephone operator or clerk would then, via a terminal, have access to the whole range of information from telephone directories and records of telephone faults to bills, stores and orders.

In a policy document written earlier this year, Vallance wrote

> A key element in preparing areas to face emerging competition is the urgent availability of customer information systems that will allow effective response to customers' needs and enquiries and that is capable of speedy development into an Area front office system.

The idea is that the person answering any customer's enquiry would be able to use a terminal to provide all the information sought. The customer would not have to be switched from department to department for each different question. In this way one person could do work currently covered by five or six people. In the brief to the task force, Vallance said that his objective was 'a programmed reduction in overhead costs by local action. This implies extensive automation of standard administrative action'.

The front office system would probably get rid of 65,000 clerical and administrative jobs. But unions will also be watching another aspect of the proposals. According to Vallance it will mean 'a radical improvement in the effectiveness of first line supervision. This implies that operational systems should give front line managers information to manage the performance of their staff'.

BT does desperately need some rationalisation of its existing computerised information services. There are already six or seven projects at various stages of development, for example for billing, mechanisation of order handling, customer rental records and area stores. But they were all being developed on different, incompatible systems. Vallance describes the current systems as 'labour intensive and unresponsive' and the traditional processes for developing new systems as 'slow, costly and unresponsive to local needs'.

All development work on existing projects was frozen last May, when the Task Force began its work. It will remain frozen until

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BT has decided on new standards. At that point the incompatible projects will have to be ditched.

BT is keen for its regions to be managed as 'profit centres' and so to move away from existing 'cross-subsidisation'. Already area general managers are encouraged to act like managing directors of companies, promoting their own special offers and implementing their own policies. This would work to the advantage of the prosperous urban areas but the rural areas may be forced to cut customer services to remain profitable. A central feature of the proposed devolution of functions is the implementation of a new customer billing system, run regionally and not nationally. BT spent £18 million last summer testing an American system, the Cincinatti Bell Customer Records Information Systems, which was to have worked on IBM computers. The system needed too much modification, however, so BT decided to develop its own, using its in-house data processing team and existing computers.

BT is also re-organising its whole data processing workforce, balancing a central effort to provide a consistent integrated national system with an independent local areas service. Vallance explains that managers will have the option of using the in-house service or alternative external services in order to create an atmosphere of competition so that the in-house development unit is inspired to develop 'cost effective systems' in 'a competitive timescale'.

One of the task force's already known recommendations is that its own staff should be increased to 150, about one third of whom would be from Logica the consultancy firm. This could cause more trouble among BT's unions. A spokesman for the Society of Civil and Public Servants said: 'This is blatant privatisation of our work. We're opposed to it in principle'.

The front office system, and BT's other rationalisations, could change BT's image with its customers and strengthen it against any new, potentially rival companies. But, while the courts may hold that some present BT union campaigns are political and not industrial under current trade union legislation, the forthcoming confrontations between BT and its unions over the computerisation involved in *these* plans will unquestionably be battles about jobs – jobs in their thousands. There will be very few left to enjoy the 'improved job satisfaction' that Vallance sees in his bright new future.□

GAY RIGHTS

Police plan pick-ups

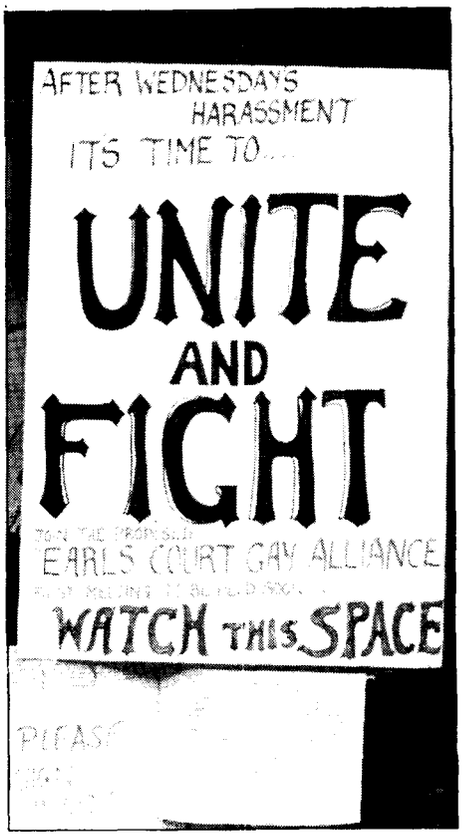
Andrew Lumsden on police solicitors

POLICE REACTION to the subject of gays veers from an uneasy lewdness to outright, strong condemnation, it appears from last weekend's report by the Policy Studies Institute. The report contains several references to this attitude within the force, yet nothing about one external manifestation – the more than 1,000 charges a year brought under Section 32 of the Sexual Offences Act 1957; or what gays call, and the police refuse to call 'entrapment'.

'He was wearing cut-offs, he kept wandering by. I caught his eye a few times. I said hi . . .' 'He was standing next to me at the urinal with his cock out doing nothing. I moved over to him . . .' 'I was approached outside the pub. I got to talking to him. He said he lived nearby . . .' – these are some of the comments of gays on the plain clothes police who have arrested them.

The charge of 'persistently soliciting or importuning in a public place for immoral purposes' (Section 32) mainly operates (as with Section 54 from another Act, currently used against male kerb crawlers) by threatening publicity. Provincial papers scrupulously give names and full addresses of men taken before magistrates under Section 32, and there is strong suspicion that police tip off the press if a public figure falls into their net (two sitting MPs, among others, in the recent past).

Fines are commonly imposed on those found guilty (£100 and upwards in magistrates' courts) but imprisonment is possible, to a maximum of two years. In 1981, magistrates fined 653 of the 830 men they found guilty of Section 32 offences; imposed suspended prison sentences on 11, and jailed four. Crown Courts fined 24 of the 48 they found guilty; imposed suspended prison sentences on four; and jailed seven – including an under 21-year-old.



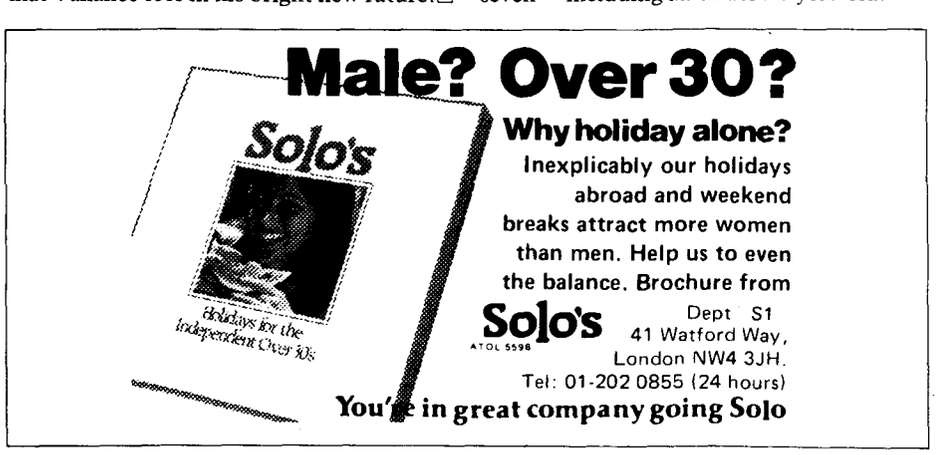
Bob Workman

Police harassment outside the Coleherne pub is nothing new: this sign was put up there in 1976 after police had arrested a number of gays while 'clearing the pavement'

How many men pleaded guilty for fear of losing a not-guilty plea? Home Office statistics don't show, but it's believed that 90 per cent of those taken before magistrates opt for a quick plea of guilty. In this, they may be ill-advised, not least by 'helpful' duty officers and under-informed solicitors. There is in fact *less* risk of publicity (unless the defendant is already famous) in the Crown Courts, where reporters have a lot to cover, than there is in magistrates' courts.

Sixty per cent of those found guilty in magistrates' courts in 1981 were under 40 years old; 33 per cent were in their twenties or even younger – down to the early teens. In part, the law is being used to prevent young men from picking up others of their own age, for purposes which have not been illegal since the 1967 Sexual Offences Act. In such cases, there would seem to be no sign of the 'immoral purpose' required by the wording of Section 32.

The number of arrests made by police under Section 32 is notoriously higher than it used to be before the partial decriminalisation of male gay behaviour in 1967. With 'only' some 1 per cent of guilty verdicts resulting in jail, and men in employment usually able to cope with the fines, the process more nearly resembles a lynching than due process. Publicity; the shock of being dragged to a police station by a man (and his abruptly appearing colleague) who had seemed to be offering to share in one of the more intimate and vulnerable of human relationships; the drawn-out horror of proceedings that may take over a year if the 'offender' chooses to go to the Crown Court and a jury; insults from police at the station;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a fear of going out of doors again and seeking partnerships – these remain the prime punishment for most, raising awkward questions about institutionalised punishment *regardless of the guilt or innocence supposed to be established by the courts*, and questions, familiar in other areas, about the press as adjunct to the police.

FIFTY GAY MEN and a concerned woman met in London on 24 October, and will meet again this month, to consider the steps that ought to be taken now that Kensington Police Station (B District Headquarters), popularly and disaffectedly known as the 'Earls Court Road police station', is once again going in for Section 32 entrapment, mainly aimed at patrons of The Coleherne pub. The Coleherne's manager, an energetic defender of his customers, was there; as was the full-time officer of GALOP – Gay London Police Monitoring Group – an independent monitoring agency, partly funded by the GLC Police Committee, which is presently helping four men who are pleading not guilty to charges under section 32.

So was a local priest, Rev Bill Kirkpatrick, who has been asked by the Church of England's area bishop, the Rt Rev Mark Santer, Bishop of Kensington, to keep a pastoral eye on events. Gays have been writing to the Bishop of London to protest about the police, and the clerical grapevine has it that all the London bishops are interested in the matter. Santer, with spiritual authority in the thronging gay community of Earls Court, admits to moral concern about the police themselves 'if it were known that policemen are being "trained" to be gay'.

Rumour has it that of course they *are* trained for entrapment duty, not only at Kensington Police Station but in others around the country – told what to wear; how to make themselves 'receptive' to advances, but not to make the first move; how, in short, to tart. There has been no shortage of stories over the years about gay policemen being forced to entrap. Gays do run across off-duty policemen in genuine pursuit of gay sex, not merely of easy convictions, and such an occurrence is not unheard of with *on*-duty policemen in the cells. On the other hand, it isn't hard to guess the attitude towards gay men of straight policemen put on entrapment duty.

The meeting of 24 October called for urgent amendment of the law and for immediate Home Office 'guidance' to Metropolitan Police Commissioner, Sir Kenneth Newman, to tell his forces to lay off. On another tack, it has been suggested that three powerfully built gay men carry out a citizen's arrest on a plain-clothes policeman from Kensington Police Station, charge him under Section 32 and see how the magistrates' court and the press feel about that.

There seems to be Home Office precedent for a Ministerial 'bollocking' of the Commissioner over the behaviour towards gays of the Kensington Police Station (where one inspector is generally regarded as being primarily responsible). In 1976, when police and gay men fought outside the Coleherne, Roy Jenkins, in his second term as Home Secretary, is understood to have sent for Sir Robert Mark and said that the developments were hardly in the spirit of the liberalising 1967 Act, over which Jenkins himself had presided. A Privy Councillor has just written to Leon Brittan to remind him of the event, and to ask him to do as much again. □

THIS ENGLAND

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□ The wedding took place at King's Lynn Register Office of Mr Ernest Scott of The Beaches, Sandy Lane, Docking to Mrs Gwendolyn Stevens of The Beaches, Sandy Lane, Docking. The future address is The Beaches, Sandy Lane, Docking. – *King's Lynn Advertiser* (Carola Zentner)

□ Those who wear poppies have a better understanding of war and peace and a greater love of their country than those who wear the CND badge. – *Scottish Daily Express* (Andrew Burke)

□ Sir, It is with diffidence that I take issue with a former shipmate of such eminence as Admiral of the Fleet Lord Lewin, but I must ask whether Lord Mountbatten would have appeared in public wearing binoculars, aiguillettes, the Garter star etc, without any form of headdress? – Letter in *The Times* (Julia Langdon)

□ The last thing that Whitehall needs is political eunuchs, a senior civil servant is telling potential recruits. The political views of a Civil Servant did not matter – he or she could have been a member of an extreme left-wing group at university. What was important was how they could look at all aspects of a problem – whether Britain should keep the Elgin Marbles for instance. – *Guardian* (Simon Montgomery)

□ A man admitted that he had been a juror at Snaresbrook Crown Court, East London, despite having 15 convictions. In two cases he was foreman. The journal reports him as having said: 'As far as I am concerned all defendants are not guilty unless they have been molesting kids. If a guy has done a bit of thieving to get a few bob that's all right with me.' – *The Times* (P. M. G. Shiel)

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DIARY

Tariq Ali

Central TV's blockbuster soap opera, *Kennedy*, was a useful reminder of the fact that American foreign policy has long been based on a single overriding principle: permanent counter-revolution. Cuba has been the most obvious failure in this regard. Where Kennedy and Nixon failed to topple Castro, it is hardly likely that Reagan will succeed. *Kennedy* brought home another fact. The slick speeches that Sorenson wrote for Kennedy were pretty much devoid of real substance. Fidel Castro, in addition to being fairly popular in Latin America, also wrote his own speeches. His recent oration at the funeral of the Cuban construction workers killed by US marines in Grenada is a case in point. The two-page ad in the *Guardian* last week was a good initiative (despite the appalling layout) as, otherwise, many of us would have been unaware of Castro's devastating rebuttal of Reagan's lies and evasions. It was a dignified and moving performance, revealing that he is virtually unique among world leaders in actually attempting to convince his audiences at home and abroad. There was no empty demagoguery or windbaggery here. Castro's catalogue of carnage inflicted by the US on Latin America is irrefutable, as is much of the factual account of the Cuban presence in Grenada. The tone, style and power of the speech is qualitatively different from the normal rhetoric of Eastern European bureaucrats. That is one reason why Cuba remains a 'thorn in the flesh' of the world's mightiest imperialist power.

○

Is there a secret trade union whose membership is restricted to former editors of the *New Statesman?* Why else would Anthony Howard have offered valuable newsprint to Paul Johnson in last Sunday's *Observer*? I must confess to having thought that Johnson's odyssey was finally over; that he had found his last resting place as an ideological footstool for the Iron Lady. Clearly not. He has decided to break with Mrs Thatcher because she capitulated to Foreign Office demands on Grenada and dissociated the government from Reagan's Caribbean adventure. What appears to be taking place is a factional struggle within the upper reaches of the Establishment. The issue is appeasement. Enoch Powell, David Watt and Sir James Cable, the former British Ambassador to Finland, are not members of what Johnson calls the 'far left'. Yet they are sounding the tocsin repeatedly. 'No appeasement of Washington' is their battle-cry. The former Ambassador has even compared Britain to a servile, client state, whose PMs and Leaders of the Opposition have to be given clearance by the White House. The Foreign Office is for appeasement, but is worried that, unless occasional pressure is exercised, the Reaganites could unleash the 'big war'. Kinnock would have been in a stronger position on his visit to 'kiss hands' in Washington were Labour committed to a foreign policy *à la* Sweden and Austria: aligned to neither of the Pacts. There is, of course, the danger that, in those circumstances, he might not have been given an audience in the first place.

○

Time to say farewell to James Curran, editor of the *New Socialist*, who is retiring to more academic pastures. The magazine has a circulation of 25,000 and actually contributed £9,000 of its profits to the Labour Party over two years. The NEC is due to discuss proposals to make the magazine a monthly from April 1984. If the intention is to increase the circulation rather than inaugurate a decline, the new editor will have to be carefully chosen. Curran was successful because, as a founding editor, he had the authority to insist on an open journalistic formula, continually encouraging debates that were far less exclusive than those selected by its rival *Marxism Today*. If the new editor is chosen on the basis of loyalty to the Shadow Cabinet, the results could be disastrous. Circulation would slump. The readership survey conducted by the magazine was unequivocal in this regard. Sixty per cent stated that the Labour leader who 'came closest to representing their views' was Tony Benn. Neil Kinnock came second with 30 per cent, followed by Michael Foot, Roy Hattersley and Eric Heffer. *New Socialist* has undoubtedly been a major success for the Labour Party as its first ever theoretical/discussion journal. It would be a tragedy if all this was to be thrown aside for the sake of petty factional gain.

○

I trust that Messrs Kinnock and Hattersley are aware of the impending shoot-out that threatens their Shadow Cabinet early next year. That is when John Silkin (Shadow Defence) takes Michael Meacher (Shadow Social Services) to court as part of his take-over bid for *Tribune*. All attempts by the paper's staff to resolve the matter peacably appear to have failed. Surely this is the time to exercise collective pressure on Silkin. His capricious behaviour has been denounced almost everywhere and has weakened Labour's powerful case against the Fleet Street monopolies. If Silkin closes down the present *Tribune*, one hopes that he will accept his penalties with good grace and that there will not be any hand-wringing by him when reselection time comes round again.

○

Much has been written about China being opened to 'capitalist-style incentives' in recent years. I cannot, however, recall a single item in the British press about the remarkable publishing programme of the country's top theoretical think-tank: the Marx-Lenin-Mao Zedong Institute in Peking. Its Director, Su Shao-zi, has presided over the most audacious Marxist project to be undertaken by a State institution in the non-capitalist world. Literature previously treated as contraband is now available in limited runs of tens of thousands to Party cadres. Trotsky's writings, Ernest Mandel's major works, Ken Coates's book on Bukharin, an appreciative Chinese study of Rosa Luxemburg, Perry Anderson's *Considerations on Western Marxism* – all are studied avidly. The latter has had to be reprinted twice. I wonder whether the recent Central Committee resolution calling for renewed vigilance against 'spiritual pollution' means that this experiment in renewing intellectual life within the Party is coming to an end. I hope not. It is, of course, possible that the 'pollution' under discussion is Hong Kong pornography, which is also now available in Chinese cities.

ROGER WODDIS

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Tory ministers have been exerting strong pressure to kill a Private Member's Bill designed to outlaw discrimination against the disabled.

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Bring in the maimed, the halt and blind,
Forget that rubbish in St Luke
And clobber any you can find.

The claims of more than one in ten
Are far too strong to be ignored,
But giving them a helping hand
Is more than Britain can afford.

There was a man who could not see,
There was a child who could not play,
There was a woman robbed of speech –
Why don't they all just go away?

When the severely handicapped
Parade their flaws about the town
And it is hard to put them off,
The best thing is to put them down.

Against the whips and scorns of time
The wheelchair cannot hope to win,
When pay beds, telephones and bombs
Provide the chance of cashing-in.

Withhold your pity from the sick,
The paralysed, the deaf and dumb,
And keep it for the ministers
Whose hearts have turned to calcium.

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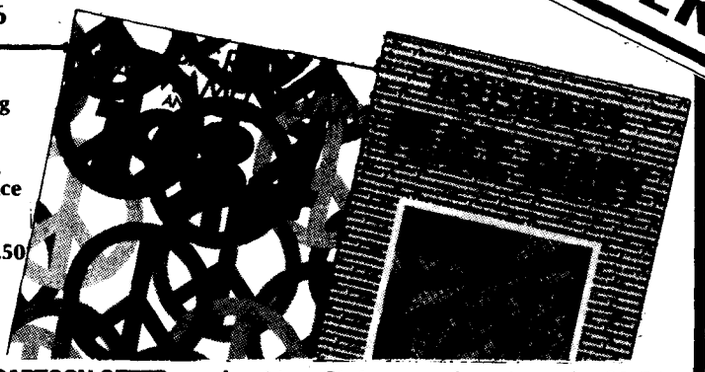

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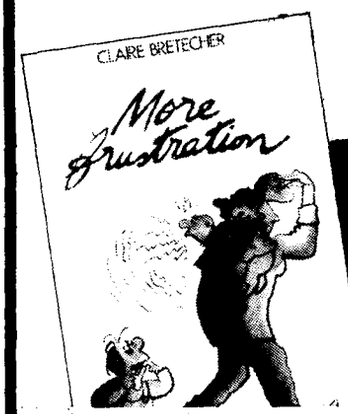

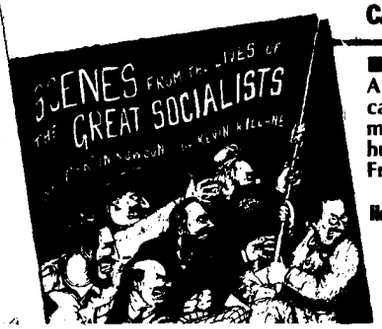

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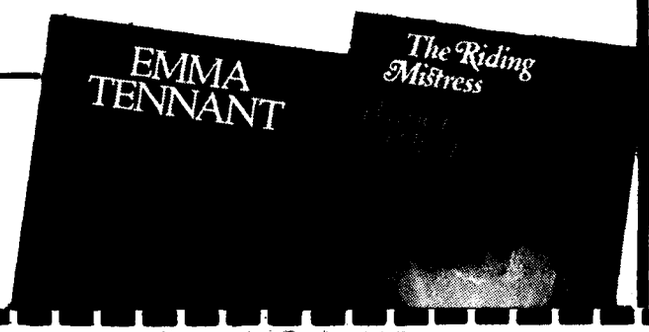

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Our debt to Ronald

In which John Kenneth Galbraith explains how President Reagan has been misunderstood and undervalued by the Left

A THIRD of a century ago – 36 years, to be precise – American liberals, broadly the American Left, gathered in Washington to regroup after the war and to heal the schisms occasioned by communism and Joseph Stalin. The result was one of the more durable of liberal organisations: Americans for Democratic Action.

We – for I was one – looked for allies wherever they might be discovered. Especially we looked, in those days, to Hollywood, where, more than anywhere else in the Republic, liberalism was associated with money – not just money, but easy money, as was it was then called. And there, from 1947 to 1952, one of our notable allies was the youthful head of the Screen Actors Guild, a committed trade unionist, a solid Roosevelt man and a financial contributor to our cause. This was the talented actor Ronald Reagan. He was, geographically and in other ways, a somewhat distant figure. But he was one of us nonetheless.

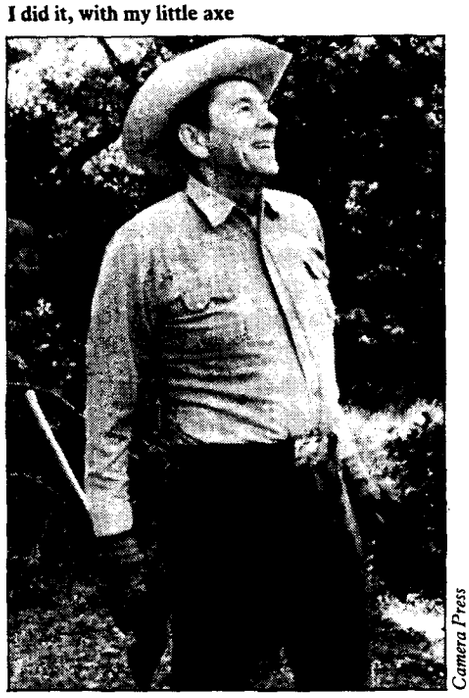
In ensuing years, we had a certain sense of being deserted. His acting career having diminished, our former colleague began giving lectures for the General Electric Company on the unparalleled virtues of the uninhibited free enterprise system. And, it was thought, he had come to believe what he was saying. He went on to be a Republican governor of California for two terms and, by reputation, a notably conservative one. It was still said in his liberal defence that he was more conservative in principle than in practice, in rhetoric than in tax and expenditure reduction. The Chancellor of the University of California at Berkeley told me in later years that he much preferred Ronald Reagan as governor to his Democratic successor, Jerry Brown. I remember his exact words: 'When Brown cuts the budget, you have to take it seriously.' Still, it seemed clear that our old co-religionist was gone.

Now Ronald Reagan has been President of the United States for approaching three years and I, for one, am no longer sure. I'm prepared to argue, not as a liberal, not plausibly as a conservative, but merely as an observer of the American political scene, that, for all this time, Ronald Reagan, in his own most famous words, has stayed the course. Popular opinion is gravely against me; only the evidence is powerfully on my side. It tempts one to believe that Ronald Reagan has been biding his time all these years, waiting to do something for the faith into which he was first initiated. Perhaps this was unconscious. By his own admission and oratory, Mr Reagan is a profoundly religious man. Who can tell, including the President himself, by what inner occult forces he has been kept faithful to his past?

The proof begins with the political, particularly the liberal, dialectic in the United States. A basic and sadly overlooked tendency in our frequently comfortable land is to relaxation. In particular, liberals and those upon whom they depend for support are only slightly stirred by their own efforts, adjurations and oratory, impassioned as these may be; it is only a vital opposing threat to our sedation, real or inspired, that brings us to political life.

Ever since Roosevelt, liberals in the United States had come to assume the solidity and even the sanctity of their basic positions – Keynesian macroeconomic management of the economy; a general, if at times ticklish, association with the trade unions; Social Security; welfare support for the helpless and the afflicted; a proper attention to the rights of women and, likewise, to those of the minorities; in principle, a more equitable distribution of income; a major emphasis on protection of the environment; a reasonable and even affluent deal for agriculture; a well-voiced concern for the problems of the big cities. Not all of these efforts had a substantial or even a wholly visible result; however, the rhetoric conveyed the *impression* of grave economic, social and compassionate concern. It was thus possible for liberals and their constituency to relax with the notion that they were making all possible progress. There having been no noticeable retreat under the three Republicans, Eisenhower, Nixon and Ford, the poor and the minorities, the people most affected by the programmes, were led to the reasonable belief that political parties did not much matter. As a very practical consequence, most of them did not bother to vote.

I did it, with my little axe



Camera Press

Blue-collar workers were likewise indifferent. Women, as ever, went along with their husbands politically. The surviving farmers moved back into their earlier Republican faith. Conservationists and environmentalists, if not entirely placid, spoke, advocated and opposed in a highly predictable way. In organisation, membership and money, they had reached a plateau. Liberal intellectuals gave speeches, wrote books and supported seemingly acceptable candidates; these gave the illusion of power and were deeply satisfying to the liberal conscience. Here, too, a mood of relaxation and contentment. So it was until, as once in Scotland, a man – another accomplished horseman, no less – came out of the west.

Had Ronald Reagan been an ordinary liberal governor coming to Washington, he would have accomplished nothing against the general condition of liberal torpor. It was the genius of our old friend and ally that, far better than others, he knew how to arouse and restore people to his ancient faith. Not the Kennedys, not Lyndon Johnson, certainly not Jimmy Carter, did so much. One must consider the facts.

Reagan has bestirred the blacks and the minorities by political action approaching genius and, on balance, more by words than by deeds. Affirmative action to guarantee jobs and promotions to blacks and women was, he made clear, no longer to be stressed – nor civil rights action generally. Tax exemption for two conspicuously segregated southern colleges was sought – a highly symbolic step. The central cities and black unemployment were taken off the agenda on which they had never quite been. Mr Peter Grace, a highly articulate businessman appointed by Mr Reagan to advise on how to streamline the government, wrote off the nutritionally urgent food stamp programme as a Puerto Rican romp – and got real attention when he sought to apologise.

The effect of these efforts is now clear. Blacks and other minorities are registering and turning to the polls in unprecedented numbers. Nearly 200,000 additional black voters, many of them young, added themselves to the Chicago rolls prior to the recent city election there; there was also an important turnout of Spanish-speaking voters and an estimated 87 per cent of them voted for Harold Washington, the black mayoral candidate. Had it not been for Ronald Reagan, Washington would never have made it in Chicago, nor, probably, would Mario Cuomo, who was also helped mightily by minority support, have become governor in New York. A similar minority turnout across the country in the next election is now a prospect; all – virtually all – of the newly-registered vote will be for liberals; the effect on the traditional political balance could be astonishing. For years, liberals have been asking for increased minority participation in what scholars call the political process. Ronald Reagan has brought it off.

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As he has promoted political activism by minorities, so the President has done wonders with women. In opposing ERA – the Equal Rights Amendment to the Constitution – and abortion, and with the help of two Pre-Cambrian Senators, Jesse Helms and Orrin Hatch, he has stirred hitherto quiescent women into action and caused some of them, for the first time, to vote in their own economic, social and sexual interests. In the 1982 off-presidential year elections, 48.5 per cent of eligible women went to the polls, up from 45.3 per cent four years earlier. Not wonderful, but a trend. This increase, too, greatly favoured liberal candidates.

THE PRESIDENT'S contribution to the environmental movement is conceded, a superbly orchestrated exercise in political education. Until he brought one Ann McGill Burford to Washington, the only Americans who had heard of industrial waste disposal sites, one or two spectacular cases apart, were those who lived next door to them, or, at most, a few hundred yards away. Now, it would appear, there is scarcely a citizen outside our big cities who does not wonder if someone is dumping dioxin in his local aquifer and causing acid rain to fall in his local lake. In September 1981, a *New York Times* poll showed 45 per cent of the citizenry wanting environmental improvement 'regardless of cost'. By April of this year, the proportion so motivated had risen to 58 per cent. 'Publicity about EPA and sweetheart deals with industry is the best thing that could have happened to us,' the *Wall Street Journal* quoted a Texas community environmentalist as proclaiming a few weeks ago.

Professor Kenneth Geiser, who teaches on these matters at Tufts University near Boston, has noted: 'Environmental advocacy during the 1970s was usually done by professionals, civic activists, students and scientists . . . [The] new national movement is based in middle- and working-class communities.' Traditional liberal advocacy could never have accomplished anything like this.

And that is not all. Before Mr Reagan named as Secretary of the Interior the unlamented James Watt, an ardent opponent of environmental controls and of measures to protect the public estate generally, my most aggressively responsible neighbours were sadly indifferent to the issue of oil and mineral exploration in distant wilderness areas and even to oil drilling on Georges Bank in the nearby Atlantic. So was I. But now I am asked about these matters all the time, and I have had to read up on them. The great American conservation organisations – the Wilderness Society, National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, Audubon Society and others – have been shaken out of their institutional stasis and are enjoying an unprecedented boom. According to former Senator Gaylord Nelson, who now heads the Wilderness Society, several have doubled their membership and funds. That was before Mr Watt banned the Beach Boys from the last Fourth of July celebration in Washington and thus brought rock music fans into the conservation camp.

Liberals have long been distressed by the failure of the unemployed to go to the polls. Again, the feeling that it did not matter. A recent *New York Times* survey showed that here too Ronald Reagan has come to the rescue. In 1982, a still unhealthy 34 per cent of the unemployed voted, as compared with a miserable 27.4 per cent in 1978. Not many of these new votes went to conservatives.

Ronald Reagan may have made progress even with farmers. A friend of mine who runs a newspaper in Illinois thinks that the President came close to breaking Illinois producers away from their conservative faith. Life in the desperate squeeze between high interest rates and (at least until recently) very low corn and livestock prices was too much even for their stalwart convictions.

As to larger macroeconomic policy, American liberals, like the British Left, have been contending with the highly attractive theory that the modern economy in all its dismaying complexity can be managed through monetary policy. A firm, expert control of the money supply by the Federal Reserve would combine stable prices with the highest possible employment. Other government policies – fiscal policy (i.e. control of spending through the budget), an incomes and prices policy to restrain wages and prices, direct action to provide jobs, government investment to encourage or sustain promising or retarded industries – were excess baggage. Counterarguments were made; they served as nothing against the glowing promises of the monetarists and Professor Milton Friedman. It was plain that only a trial, however disagreeable, would prove the error. Not in Britain, not in Chile, not in Israel, but here at home.

> ‘Ronald Reagan, in his own most famous words, has stayed the course’

This trial Ronald Reagan provided, and the resulting pain and suffering were for all to see and many to feel. The recession so caused was, indeed, so painful that the grip on the money supply has now been relaxed, interest rates have been allowed to fall, direct government jobs action has been initiated and Professor Friedman has publicly condemned the apostasy. In consequence, some recovery is now under way. No experience could have better served to extrude the idea of a monetary magic from the public mind.

Also, nothing could have been better designed to persuade liberals themselves to contemplate means for controlling inflation that do not depend on the restrictive forces of unemployment, idle plant capacity and endemic bankruptcy – in other words, some form of direct incomes and prices policy. I am prepared to concede, however, that here Mr Reagan has not been entirely successful. The alternative proposals on economic policy, including those in general of the Democratic candidates for President, are still at a fairly primitive level. Most still rely on the somewhat questionable proposition that God is a liberal Democrat and will look after His own.

MORE TO BE acknowledged is President Reagan's far-from-insignificant service on the matter of supply-side economics. The basic case here was that the rich were not working and investing because they were receiving too little money and that the poor were not working because they were getting too much. The magic word was incentives – incentives for both the rich and the poor. Supply-side policy reflected, in turn, the great asymmetry in our public and political life. An American politician may be in favour of public or private action on behalf of the poor and, indeed, he is often compelled to be; he must never speak openly in favor of action on behalf of the rich. Here both liberals and conservatives must resort to a decent camouflage.

However, supply-side economics was sufficiently transparent for Americans to see through it to the truth. It was clearly a design, imperfectly disguised, by which the affluent were accorded more income to enjoy – as all income is enjoyed. And it was the singular contribution of Mr David Stockman, President Reagan's Director of the Office of Management and Budget, to make this explicit in a famous interview in the autumn of 1981. There is at least a chance that, in the future, voters and their representatives in Washington will react to talk about improved incentives by wondering who out there is seeking enrichment now. This would be a really major gain.

I have been speaking of domestic issues; it would be a grave injustice to ignore the President's contribution on foreign and military policy. Ever since those summer days in 1945, people everywhere have lived under the threat of the nuclear terror. John F. Kennedy spoke of it as the Damoblean sword suspended over our heads and of his determination not to let a day go by without thought as to how the threat might be lessened. Missing in the United States, however, was a massive public concern for the issue. Americans had somehow come to terms with the horror, or, as with the thought of personal death, had resorted to the psychological denial that enabled them to put it out of mind. Arms control had become the undisturbed domain of the small group of nuclear theologians who were presumed to understand the issue, a convocation that included quite a few ardent supporters of the arms race.

This, for a democracy, was an appalling delegation of power, a surrender of the power of decision over death that would never have been made if the decision were over taxes. Here again, with much help from his subordinates, the President has come to the rescue. Talk of limited nuclear war, of protracted nuclear war, of 'prevailing' in nuclear war, of civil defence and the shovels that would save us in a nuclear attack and the brilliantly prolonged debate over the basing of the MX missile have awakened Americans as never before to the perils of

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the world in which they live. For a long time, with others, I have been speaking and attempting to persuade on the subject of arms control, including, for the last several years, on the notion of a bilateral nuclear freeze. The effort was deeply discouraging; at times, as when we brought the freeze to a vote at the Democratic National Convention in 1980, we were thought slightly eccentric.

Now, arms control is perhaps the most urgent political issue of the day. And concern will, I think, survive the setback from the Korean plane disaster. A freeze resolution passed the House of Representatives earlier this year with a wholly safe majority. Much of the specific credit belonged to Caspar Weinberger, the Secretary of Defense, and his ability on any average day to promote a little panic. But Ronald Reagan was the President of the United States and the man ultimately in charge. It is he who must be thanked.

A NOT INSIGNIFICANT contribution of the President was in affirming Dwight D. Eisenhower's classic warning about the danger lurking in the prospective power of the military-industrial complex. That this power had obtruded could not have been better dramatised than by the appointment to the positions of Navy Secretary and Assistant Secretary of Defense of exceptionally well-paid and eventually well-publicised arms lobbyists – consultants is the modern and possibly more damaging designation. Partly in consequence of this and the arms buildup in general, slightly more critical attention is now being accorded the Defense Department budget than in earlier years. There could, with advantage, be much more.

President Reagan's effort on behalf of the liberal Left is not one of unbroken success. I live in close proximity to the university world; there, he has not succeeded in provoking the students to political action as one might have expected, though it is not for want of effort. The move to deny aid to those who had not registered for the draft did not re-ignite the earlier opposition to conscription. The intervention in El Salvador and Nicaragua has stirred a measure of response, and there could be yet more ahead – a reference by the President to a domino effect in Latin America was an inspired reminder of Vietnam. Still, as compared with earlier times, the campuses have been quiet – something that can be attributed to the effect of conflicting policies. Set against the steps that might have aroused the students was the monetarist experiment and, as observed, the severe recession. These caused students to worry about their jobs and careers. So, instead of rallying to the opposition as they did in the '60s, they have been preoccupied with their prospects in medicine, business administration, dentistry, law and veterinary science. A modest failure.

PRESIDENT REAGAN has, however, one further achievement to his credit, perhaps the most impressive of all. He has brought about an hitherto unparalleled unity on the liberal Left. In past times, blacks, women, the trade unions, the environmentalists and the peace groups have all had their special agendas. This, reinforced as always by the vanity of their leaders, kept them apart and on occasion at odds.

This summer, on 27 August, all of these groups submerged their special concerns and came together, 200,000 strong, for the great march in Washington under the common banner of Jobs, Peace and Freedom, the latter being the code word for civil rights and equality. All who observed this convocation were impressed by the way in which parochial concerns were submerged for the day and, most thought, for the months ahead. And some were not above giving credit where credit was due. Andrew Young, the one-time aide to Martin Luther King Jr, one-time United States Representative at the United Nations and now the Mayor of Atlanta, was specifically generous. 'There is no question,' he said, 'that Ronald Reagan was the organising factor that pulled this coalition together.'

The President's contribution to the causes of his old friends and to the correction of their faults has been remarkable, and the obvious question for American liberals is whether, having discovered that Ronald Reagan, in the more reticent part of his personality, has been on their side all these years, they should join to vote him another term in office. Should they as liberals, recognising their debt to an avowed conservative who knows so well how to motivate liberals, vote conservative to advance the liberals' cause?

Here I waver. The cost of the Reagan education, in suffering and social division, has been too severe. The social contract which seemed to accord most Americans a decent chance for survival in the system will be exceedingly hard to repair. Also the damage to the morale of the public agencies that were responsible in a motivated way for job safety, the public estate, the environment, education and diverse help to the poor. Also, and above all, there is the need to get back from the nuclear brink and to end intervention in Central America and such enterprises as the descent on Grenada. The Reagan remedy for liberal lethargy and contentment had best not be extended for another four years. □

This article is published jointly with the New York Review of Books.

MADAME BLAVATSKY

INCOMPARABLE GENIUS OR DESPICABLE FRAUD?

The only way to resolve this problem is to read *her* works for oneself, and not what others, unable or unwilling to study and comprehend her monumental works, have said and written. If you are interested in discovering a philosophy, worthy of the highest intellect, embracing all religion and philosophy, and much science, we suggest you write for a reading list to:

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P.O. Box 16, London W3 6HS

WEST GERMANY

Lone wolf?

Richard Burns on a bomb attack's unanswered questions

AN ATTEMPT is being made to re-open investigation into the Munich Oktoberfest bombing. Thirteen people were killed and over two hundred wounded when a bomb exploded at the main entrance to the Fest's grounds on 26 September 1980.

Munich lawyer Werner Dietrich is representing two victims of the attack – both of whom were appalled by the report, produced by the Federal Attorney last November, in which it was held that Gundolf Kohler had acted alone in preparing and planting the bomb, which also took his own life. It is not denied that Kohler was a member of the Armed Sports Group Hoffmann, a notorious neo-Nazi organisation. According to evidence, he had learnt to handle explosives with them. On 26 September, however, he is supposed to have performed independently.

Evidently, Kohler had been upset at not being given a place at Munich University and took violent revenge. But the university's rejection letter arrived at Kohler's home on the day of the explosion. It would hardly have been feasible to have built the complicated bomb and taken it to Munich all on the same day. On the other hand, there are eye-witness reports that:

- Kohler was seen in the company of between three to five others wearing military parkas and nationalist badges immediately prior to the explosion.
- The previous night, members of the Armed Sports Group Hoffmann had been talking of a planned action for the Oktoberfest.
- Hoffmann himself has let it be known that his group was responsible for the blast.

The authorities have hindered any initiatives proceeding from the theory that the attack was the act of more than one man. On the first anniversary, a memorial placed at the spot of the explosion by anti-fascist groups was removed by the Bavarian police. A 'j'accuse' rally, planned for the second anniversary, was refused a permit by the city council. In addition, Dietrich has had to fight for six months to obtain records that should be available automatically.

Dietrich is now convinced that the 'individual act' argument is not tenable and that Kohler had at least four or five accomplices. The question is why the authorities are so keen to deny that the bomb attack was a political action. As *Stern* journalist Peter Hobel remarked: 'I'm sure that if Kohler hadn't been caught at the event, they'd have accused the leftists by now.' □

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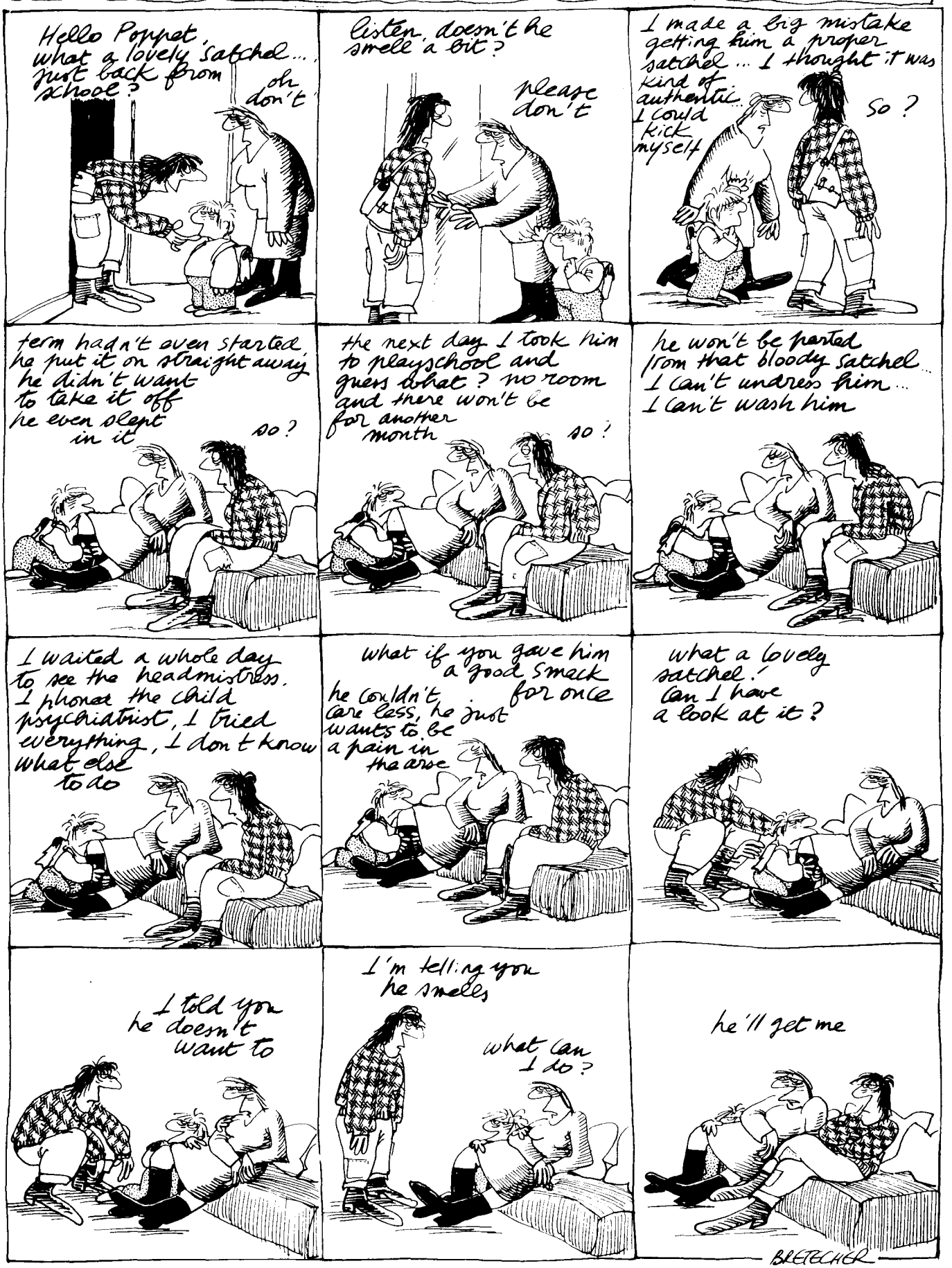
BRETECHER

PARFUM D'ENFANT


Hello Poppet, what a lovely satchel... just back from school?
oh don't
Listen, doesn't he smell a bit?
please don't
I made a big mistake getting him a proper satchel ... I thought it was kind of authentic... I could kick myself
so?
term hadn't even started he put it on straight away he didn't want to take it off he even slept in it
so?
the next day I took him to playschool and guess what? no room and there won't be for another month
so?
he won't be parted from that bloody satchel... I can't undress him... I can't wash him
I waited a whole day to see the headmistress. I phoned the child psychiatrist, I tried everything, I don't know what else to do
what if you gave him a good smack for once
he couldn't care less, he just wants to be a pain in the arse
what a lovely satchel! can I have a look at it?
I told you he doesn't want to
I'm telling you he smells
what can I do?
he'll get me
BRETECHER

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LETTERS

New flexible Communism

Tricia Davis, Birmingham

Sarah Benton, in her piece on the recent Communist Party Congress (*NS* 18 November) is quite right to stress that the Party has a long way to go before the conflict with the *Morning Star* management committee is resolved. Her allusion to the fact that the Party needs to do some serious thinking about its strategic programme is also relevant. While the Congress was fought in defence of our 1977 programme, *The British Road to Socialism*, in my view what was at stake were the *principles* of that programme. I have no wish to see the details inscribed on tablets of stone as a new dogma.

But the context within which Sarah Benton placed these useful comments was stunningly apolitical. What she appeared to suggest was that it was the attitude of the Party's General Secretary which was the only factor in deciding the outcome of the Congress. During the last few years, large numbers of Communist Party members have been working to develop and express a Marxist politics which can respond to a new political and economic situation, which is non-sectarian in its attitude towards autonomous movements and which, through being tested in an imaginative practice, can overcome the traditional Marxist tendency towards elitism.

It was these principles which were behind the decisions taken by Gordon McLennan and the various committees, and behind the mood and voting at the Congress.

Windscale: not proven

Mr J. A. Preece, Director Information Services, British Nuclear Fuels Ltd

James Cutler's article (*NS* 18 November) on the recent Yorkshire Television programme about BNFL's reprocessing plant at Sellafield contained, like the programme itself, many innuendoes, irrelevancies and inaccuracies. You would not allow me space to list them. The central allegation, however, is that excesses of cancer in some local communities are due to extra radiation arising from nuclear operations at Sellafield. Nowhere in Mr Cutler's article, nor indeed in the television programme, was any evidence provided in support of this claim.

Professor Radford, who was identified as a key figure in support of the allegation, agreed in the programme discussion with Peter Mummery, BNFL's director of health and safety, that for a tenfold excess of leukaemia among young children at Seascale to be due to radiation, then the extra radiation received by all the children in Seascale every hour of every day of every year of their lives would have to be at least ten times (and perhaps 100 times) that of the naturally occuring radiation to which we are all exposed. In fact, figures published regularly by ourselves, by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and by the National Radiological Protection Board show that the radiation levels are about one thousandth of that requirement.

It is to be regretted that YTV did not consider, even in principle, other possible causes of the claimed cancer clusters – for example: a virus, genetic relationships, or environmental factors other than radiation from nuclear operations. One wonders why not.

THREE ADS FOR THE PRICE OF TWO OVER CHRISTMAS

See page 37

Police racism: last *last* word

Jim Rolfe-Herbert, Ken Montague, Paul Harrison, Sue Baker, Clive Boutle, Peter Stones, Geoff Barrett, NATFHE, Hendon College of FE

It now seems to be the tactic of all those who defend the NATFHE leadership in the Metropolitan Police Cadet School affair to befog the issue. The recent letter from the Secretaries of the Brent and Barnet Liaison Committee (*NS* 11 November) is another glaring example.

As officers and members of NATFHE at Hendon College of FE – the College now charged with servicing the Cadet School – could we make a few points clear. First, it is quite false to suggest that NATFHE's official position in some way represented 'unified collective action' while those who supported John Fernandes were mavericks acting in violation of the 'principles of trade unionism'. Since the start of this dispute, two of the three branches most directly concerned – Kilburn Polytechnic's and our own – have consistently supported John's stand against racism among the police cadets and have been appalled at the cynicism of the union hierarchy in its attempts to sabotage his defence campaign.

Large meetings of our branch at the time expressed opposition to the transfer of the police servicing work to Barnet as effectively undermining the boycott of the Cadet School imposed by the Brent authority. We believe that had the NATFHE leadership also adopted such a view the union would have been in a far stronger position to hold Brent to its pledge of no job losses and to resist forcible redeployment and the Premature Retirement scheme. As a result of all this, however, our branch was by-passed by the union in many of the discussions with Barnet over the terms of the transfer. Negotiations were held without our knowledge and decisions presented to us as a *fait accompli*. Such is NATFHE's view of 'trade union principles'.

Secondly, it is quite disingenuous to claim that 'all those who asked to continue their involvement with civilian work at the Police School are now employed by the Barnet Authority'. The formulation, 'those who wish to be employed' gained currency when it became clear that the Barnet Authority was likely to retain only 16 of the original 28 posts. What actually occurred at Hendon – with the encouragement of the full-time union official – was that an elaborate 'interview' procedure was concocted, whereby those still working at the School (that is, those who did not come out in John's support) would be given first consideration for re-employment. The real achievement of NATFHE was to lose 12 posts, to force on Barnet everything they wanted in the first place, and effectively to endorse the original victimisation. So much for 'so-called trade union campaigns which align themselves with the employers . . .'

It is even wrong to claim that the FE work at the Cadet School is 'now under the control of the Governors and the Academic Board of Hendon College'. After only three months, there are clear indications that the police are prepared to modify or even axe courses without consultation with staff. A recent Principal's report to the Governors (15 November 1983) states categorically that 'the final say on course content shall be with the Police'. Throughout this dispute the NATFHE leadership has confused its priorities, shown no sense of tactics and been willing to abandon any principle to extricate itself from a sticky situation.

Try again, Tilley

Mrs Margaret Thorpe, Stourbridge, W. Midlands

John Tilley (Letters 18 November) claims to have read Peter Tatchell's book, *The Battle for Bermondsey*, twice. I can only think that either his copy had many pages missing or he read what he wanted to find.

He claims that Tatchell does not offer 'a real analysis of the differences between Liberal activists' community politics and grass roots community socialism'. I find this criticism particularly strange, as I felt that this aspect of the book was particularly eloquently explained: '. . . instead of focusing on the issues, the Liberals indulge in a glorified form of social work which deals more or less exclusively with people's individual problems . . . they never explain or agitate against more fundamental causes of everyday problems'.

It is also extremely unfair and inaccurate to say that Tatchell blames the media and the opinion polls for his defeat. To his credit he does not take this soft option. He even says 'we must avoid the all too common tendency to set up scapegoats to explain away setbacks'. You cannot get much clearer than this to illustrate that Tatchell has tried to put forward a complex explanation not only of his own defeat but also Labour's catastrophic performance on June 9th. This analysis does offer a very reasonable explanation of why Labour seats are going to the Liberals. It is precisely because Tatchell's 'grassroots community socialism' is not being practised by many members of the Labour Party that Labour has lost support in the local communities.

Perhaps John Tilley should buy a complete version of the book or read his own copy again.

Gossip gathering

Kingsley Amis, c/o Macmillan, 4 Little Essex Street, London WC2

Anecdotes about writers and artists in general give a unique insight into the life of any historical period, and are often funny in a special way too. In an age like ours, when personal letters are written much less than formerly and diaries of record seldom kept, there is a danger that many such anecdotes will die with their raconteurs.

To remedy this, I have been commissioned by Messrs Macmillan to gather a collection, and now ask your readers for their assistance in bringing to my attention material I should otherwise miss. Any anecdote ('narrative of amusing or interesting incident' – C.O.D.) of this century is eligible if it involves the arts or artists, including writers and the written word and the performing arts and artists. Sources should be given where possible. Attribution will be made where appropriate. Material should be sent to me at the address above. I regret that I cannot guarantee to reply, but material accompanied by a SAE will be returned. I reserve the right to tinker with the text if it has not previously appeared in print.

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10-page supplement

NHS IN CRISIS

PEOPLE grumble about their doctors' arrogance and ignorance, hate the queues at hospitals, curse striking hospital workers – and nonetheless feel an obstinate fidelity to their National Health Service which, it appears, nothing can shake (Popularity, pVII). It remains a symbol of our public aspiration: that the purpose of the State and of State spending should be to provide for the ill, the old and the vulnerable on the basis of need not status.

There can be no doubt that the first thing the NHS needs is more money. Britain spends proportionately less on its health service than does any other developed country (Spending pVIII). It only maintains the quality of care because the private sector is too small as yet to have a major distorting influence, and because it rests on cheap but dedicated labour. But in any increase in spending – and this government plans 0.5 per cent real increase per year – it is just as important for money to go into local authority budgets to pay for home helps and day care centres. If this community care is not enormously increased the 'front line' hospital service will degenerate into a string of shabby and remote institutions for the aged and mentally disturbed (pp II-III).

With hardly a whimper from the Treasury, the government is finding an extra £1 billion a year for the 1,800 inhabitants of the Falklands Islands. This is larger than the entire health budget for Wales with 2.5 million residents.

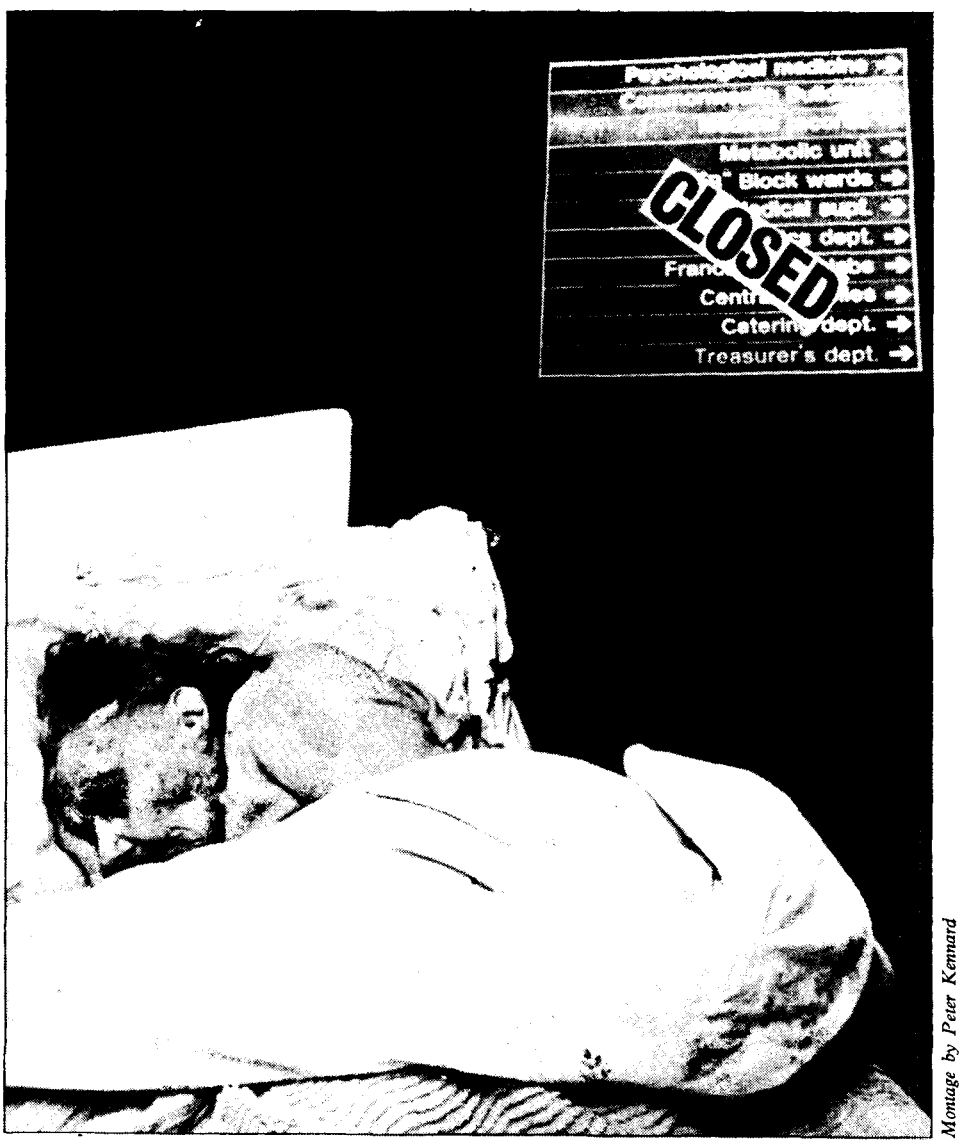
More money, essential as it is, will not on its own provide the best system of health care. Priorities and patterns for the health service are not decided by the Secretary of State, the Regional Health Authority or the Community Health Council. They 'emerge' around the special interests of hospital consultants, who enjoy a quite disproportionate power within the NHS and who shroud decisions which have huge financial and organisational implications under a blanket of secrecy about their 'clinical judgment'.

Buttressing the consultants' position is the widespread belief that the priorities of the health service should be the provision of glamorous cures for a small number of identifiable illnesses, rather than routine care for the 'grey' illnesses – the elderly and mentally ill (pIV), the arthritic and bronchitic (ppII-IV). Rather than competing with each other to buy the latest piece of equipment – the value of which may still be unproven (pIII) – a far higher proportion of public spending should go on the community carers (p IV). This would help correct the distortion in our health care system which is shaped to accommodate the prestige and timetable of hospital consultants in the orthodox specialties. It is particularly urgent now that so many consultants, especially in London, spend so much of their time on private work. To see the absurdity of this, imagine that our whole State education system was shaped to accommodate the desire of State-salaried head-teachers to earn a large second salary by giving private tuition during the school day – frequently using the local school premises and resources to do so, and making the non-fee-paying children wait while they did so. The private sector will not go away; but it must become wholly private and independent from the NHS. Consultants wishing to do private work should leave the NHS (pIX).

The private sector in the form of drug companies also distorts our health priorities. The pharmaceutical industry encourages the medical profession to practise a form of drug-based treatment that not infrequently positively poisons or harms the patients. This government should insist on generic drug prescribing and a lower profit margin (pVIII). A Labour government should take drug manufacture into public control. It should also take into the NHS the unorthodox healing services, like osteopathy and acupuncture.

Such distortions cannot be put right with the present structure of the NHS. It needs a firmer system of accountability upwards on the details of management, organisation and finance; there is a serious lack of proper accountancy in the NHS. But professional management of day-to-day affairs must only be introduced along with a proper system of democratic accountability for the priorities and plans of the NHS. At least one-third of both District Health Authorities and Regional Health Authorities should be drawn from – and be answerable to – the community, in the form of clients, Community Health Councils and social service employees.

The Conservatives have grossly underestimated how 'precious' the jewel of the NHS is still to most British people. But if it is to be preserved as a shining example, there must be radical changes in its excessively hierarchical, orthodox and status-obsessed structure. □



Montage by Peter Kennard

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Fortress mentality

OUR HEALTH service is obsolete. It is designed to isolate victims of infection, to provide a haven for the incurably ill, and to offer the hope of cure to a few of the sick. Twentieth-century technology has been grafted onto Poor Law Infirmaries and their tower-block successors, while Medicine stalks Disease like a nineteenth-century hunter tracking fearsome beasts. The result is a disorderly, sprawling industry growing on an amalgam of interests.

Desperation, pain, illness, and the fear of illness all demand humane responses. Science and technology offer hope, success, profit and pathways to power. Responsibility for disease and disorder seeks a home, and departments of bacteriology, oncology or psychiatry offer it one. Burdens are passed, from the ill to the well, from related to anonymous people, and from the powerful back to the powerless. All of this is necessary, and much of it is appropriate, but so little is really what it seems. In the ideologies of health care, as in other ideologies, 'all that is solid melts into air'.

Think of an everyday problem. An elderly man, coughing up copious amounts of sputum, stops an uphill walk to catch his breath. He dreads the winter. From November to March the cold air cuts deeper into his chest, and his lungs tighten. Winter epidemics find him already vulnerable. He notices the first signs of disease well before others become concerned. The increasing effort of climbing the stairs or getting to the shop, the loss of appetite, the misery of lying down and the relief at sitting up, warn him of what to expect. When the neighbour, the shopkeeper or, perhaps, his doctor notice the blue tinge to his lips or the green phlegm he spits into his handkerchief, the disease is well established. Treatment, given now, might make some difference to him, if he can be cared for effectively. His diagnosis is 'acute or chronic bronchitis' but his problem is 'who cares?'. If he lives alone, has no close friends nor relatives, and lacks neighbours able to look after him, he may become a candidate for hospital admission.

Hospitals are fortresses of medicine. Like all fortresses they both absorb the energy and resources of their territory, and dominate it. The share of NHS spending taken by hospital services has never fallen below 50 per cent and has tended to rise nearer to 70 per cent over the last 30 years (see page VI). Our bronchitic man, arriving on to a modernised Nightingale ward in his local District General Hospital, will not think or care about that. His anxiety at being in a place that plays purgatory's role before paradise will pre-occupy him. Perhaps the familiar barrack-room layout will remind him of past ordeals, long survived. Maybe the dread of isolation and slow decline will dissipate in the ward's light. The hospital will give him warmth, attention 24 hours of the day, regular food, and medical care. The ward regime may be long and hard, the other patients troublesome, and the attention sometimes cursory, but none of this will outweigh a solitary decline in his own home.

Hospital medicine has something to offer him, but not much. Antibiotics, oxygen and a physiotherapist will help him. None of these treatments needs a hospital, but all are part of hospital care. What else does he gain from his admission, apart from sanctuary? Perhaps the most thorough medical examination he has ever had; a chest X-ray; 'routine' blood tests; and precise identification of the bacteria in his sputum. The examination and the chest X-ray can be done almost anywhere, and do not need a hospital setting. The routine blood tests are as valuable and valueless as any routine investigation. Some will reveal new problems, but most will demonstrate 'normality', with all the false security that that implies. If they must be done, they could be done almost anywhere.

For him, the hospital is a nursing station, a haven into which he can retreat when his usual environment fails him. He, with his bronchitis, is no different from many, perhaps the majority, of those in the beds around him. The effects of their diabetes, their strokes, their epilepsy, their asthma, their failing hearts or even their operations, have outrun the strengths of their normal worlds. As our man recovers, he can anticipate (if he chooses) future admissions, when winter, infection and perhaps the many years of smoking combine against him. For him and all like him, the hospital must have a revolving door. If it did not, because of NHS budget cuts or staff shortages, he would lose his necessary sanctuary.

Number of hospital beds in use daily

1949: **376,000** 1980: **289,000**

Number of beds available daily for diseases of the chest

1970: **10,800** 1980: **4,200**

With the exception of geriatrics, the number of hospital beds available has decreased significantly because patients are kept in hospital for much shorter periods.

The average length of stay, for all specialties, has fallen from 49.3 days in 1949 to 18.6 days in 1980. For diseases of the chest it has halved, in ten years, from an average 30.5 days in 1970 to 15.7 days in 1980.

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Bronchitic man and 'cure'

THE BRONCHITIC man's problem is not the only one that our hospitals accept, nor is it the focus of modern medicine. Nevertheless, his kind of crisis is the bread-and-butter of everyday medical care, whether in hospital wards, casualty departments or outpatient clinics. When people are poorest, jobs most infrequent, labour most mobile and knowledge least, medical practice is least technical and scientific.

An active philosophy of 'cure' militates against our bronchitic being anything other than a hopeless case. The most powerful person that he will see on his ward will be the surgeon – visiting another patient, not him. The most useful person on his ward may be a nurse, an orderly or a social worker, because they provide support, boost morale and give practical help. In the NHS their roles, incomes, training opportunities, working conditions and control over decisions will be distinctly inferior to those of the main protagonists, the active, decisive figures in nursing and medicine who personify health care.

He, as a patient, will be categorised according to the philosophy: a 'social admission'; perhaps 'not for resuscitation'; certainly the victim of his own failings, a tobacco addict beyond cure. All the categories may be valid, but they are for the carers, not the patient. He has become the object of a philosophy and a practice that has little active to offer him.

Others have greater priority. There is too little time for him now because so many others both need it and make better use of it. Surgery offers survival and reconstruction to accident victims, kidney transplantation to those on dialysis, real cure to some with cancer, relief in complicated labour, and new hips for the arthritic. Lasers cure detached retinas and early cervical cancer. Physicians control life-long disabilities like asthma, diabetes and epilepsy. Not all of this hectic activity needs the hospital as a backdrop, but history has built the fortresses and staffed them, and the combatants are well dug-in.

For the 'pompous trades and proud mechanics' of the NHS, the doctors and technicians and nurses, there is too much to do each day to think, too long, of preventing the problems we work so hard to cure. 'Cure' itself now has value to the curers as well as to the cured. Empires can be built on it, and it can be sold in private practice. (In 1978 92 per cent of ophthalmic surgeons were involved in private practice, compared

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with 8 per cent of consultants in mental handicap.) Even when it cannot be captured, 'cure' must be pursued. That is one reason why our hospitals spent increasing amounts on staff, equipment and units of treatment throughout the seventies, on a population of patients that expanded only slowly or, in some instances, decreased.

Will we know what to do?

THE MAN with bronchitis really needed a warm home, food, and people to care for him, through his crisis. Conventional wisdom now recognises that 'cure' and its institutions have little to offer him, just as a businessman's government abandons such institutions in favour of subsidies to industrialists and a warfare economy. New sources of money are needed to keep the increasingly costly hospitals afloat, and new sources of support are needed to look after the ill and disabled. 'Effectiveness' and 'efficiency' are the new buzz words in health care, alongside 'community care' and 'self-help'. Originating on the liberal left, they have been adopted by the right, which, unlike the left, can match slogans to practice.

If both more money and more carers are needed, the Conservatives have no doubts about where to find them – at home. Should the man with bronchitis need care because 'cure' is inappropriate, he must organise it. The wealthy bronchitic can pay for care directly. The provident will insure themselves or their families against the need to buy care. The rest must cobble together their own support from relatives, friends and neighbours. Professionals in social work, nursing or general practice can organise the volunteers and charities that try to plug the holes in a complex welfare net. As a last resort, the bronchitic man could still return to his local public hospital, if it remains open. Looking more and more like a Poor Law Infirmary through bed shortages, poor mantainance and overworked staff, the hospital would keep its door revolving for him – but less freely, and with less human concern than before. Through it all health insurance companies, nursing agencies and flagday collectors will advance themselves as altruistic benefactors of the needy. Mothers, wives and daughters will tolerate, more or less, the blackmail that makes them into unpaid nurses.

It need not be like this. It is true that health services demand increasing resources, and the yield (in terms of 'cure') is low. There seems little doubt that medical care can be used unwisely by the population, and no doubt that it can be applied inappropriately by professionals. Both pressure on spending and inappropriate use may be facts of life that we must accept, up to a point. The idea that has yet to enter politics, however, is that the market makes both trends worse, not better. The answer to rising costs and inappropriate medicine is not private provision, but *more* social provision. It is the nature of that extra social provision that is important.

The more profitable drugs are, the more their producers will promote drug solutions to medical problems, and the more they will re-define social problems as medical ones. The more direct the payment to surgeons, the more they will operate, if American and West German experience means anything. The more a GP's income depends on numbers treated, the greater the incentive to have a high throughput and short consultations. To match needs to services, and skills to problems, we need to separate payment from treatment, needs from wants.

Part of the National Health Service is community-based. It is a poorly organised, largely unplanned network that reaches the whole population, if only fleetingly. It has expanded slowly compared with the hospital service, and it now obtains a decreasing share of the NHS budget. Even as it stands, this network acts as a filter, dealing with some problems and passing others to specialist services. If it were expanded, organised and planned, could it not deal with the *real* needs of the bronchitic man?

If there were more time available, and a planned approach by health workers to those measurably in greatest need, could

How Expensive Medical Techniques (EMTs) increase costs without anyone noticing

a) A piece of X-ray or laboratory equipment is routinely replaced by the next generation of equipment which is capable of more advanced tests. This is not recognised in advance. The consequences show up in the increasing inflation, in the number of tests and rise in costs.

b) A department responds to pressure to introduce a new service. This is accommodated by adjusting the workload. Once established, the pressure grows to make the new service more widely available. A case is then made out for **additional** staff on the grounds of inability to meet the **routine** workload without declaring that a new service has been introduced.

c) A committee appoint a new consultant with a special interest, without exploring with the unsuspecting District the consequences of doing so. Renal transplantation arrived at more than one hospital this way.

e) When professional opinion in a specialty reaches agreement about the advantages of a particular EMT, pressure and influence are brought to bear, through the advisory committee structure, on the RHA to introduce it at a particular centre. The EMT is allocated to a District, and while the District, which has to find the running costs and may in due course have to fund the replacement, has the right to accept or reject, the full consequences of the development may not be readily apparent at the time and will almost certainly not be declared by the specialty.

f) The pressure to introduce an EMT especially one believed to be life-saving, is difficult to withstand when a speciality or consultant is acting in alliance with another powerful group.

Extracted from *Expensive Medical Techniques*; A report by a working party of the council for Science and Society, 1982.

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The decline of the community nurse

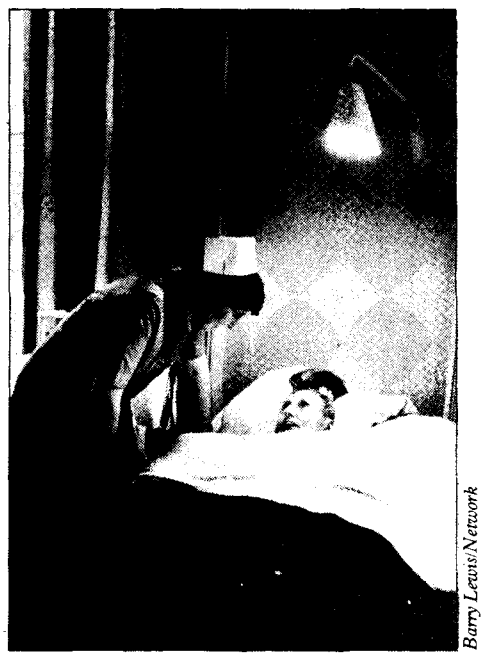
	1974	1979
Health Service nursing staff total	309,063	354,422
Total hospital nursing staff	256,770	297,684
Total number of hospital medical staff (i.e. doctors, consultants, registrars etc)	27,576	32,607
Number of consultants and equivalent	10,623	11,891
percentage of women	*8.4%*	*10.5%*
Community health nursing staff	23,414	29,512
as percentage of hospital nursing staff	*9.1%*	*8.3%*
Hospital midwifery staff	15,002	17,039
Community health midwifery staff	4,237	2,984
community as percentage of hospital	*28.2%*	*17.5%*
Number of GPs	20,219	21,357

In 1982 the number of hospital medical and dental staff had increased to 39,400, of whom about 1,000 are dentists.

In 1982 the number of total nursing staff had increased to 397,100. This large increase is partly explained by the reduction in the hours of hospital nurses from 40 to 37.5. The DHSS say they do not have up-to-date breakdowns of hospital staff because of these changes and the disruption caused by industrial action last year.

people learn more about their own health and ill-health, and thereby gain greater control over their lives? If no-one can 'cure' the bronchitic of smoking, could we not dissuade others from joining him? If the treatment of illness is simple compared with the organisation of support, should we not spend NHS time and money organising that support where and when it is most needed, instead of concentrating the ill in laboratories of pathology? When crises merge together, is it not possible to maintain care in familiar surroundings, with as many familiar people as possible? Why should 'cure' be kept in reserve, when more curative services can be brought closer to home and work, and nearer the origins of illness?

None of this is possible without spending money on the most important resource in health care – human skill. Health education, preventive care, screening, early diagnosis, acute care, long-term support – all rely primarily on the time and ability of health workers in face-to-face contact with health service users, and only secondarily on technology and chemistry. Until we have a strong front-line to the health service, our care will become mixed with 'cure', to the detriment of each. We need more nurses, health visitors, midwives and specialist workers with the time and the skill to reach out to the while population, to solve current problems and, in anticipating future ones, pre-empt them. We need more doctors and dentists and pharmacists and opticians with the time to plan and achieve real objectives in maintaining their patients' health.



Barry Lewis/Network

If cure is to take its rightful second place to health maintenance, we must accept that the National Health Service cannot be maintained as it is. That will be hard. A real shift of resources to the front-line, and a restriction of the role of the specialist in favour of the non-specialist, will upset the institutions, hierarchies, power-relations and pay-scales so thoroughly constructed since 1948. The creation of a barrier to hospital care may hurt those who value its real or imagined power. Planning will disturb those fearful of any control, and offend those unaccustomed to consultation, questioning and debate.

As we pin on our lapel badges for the local hospital campaign, sign the petitions, and march down the high street, perhaps we should ask ourselves if we could respond to victory. If the Conservatives back down and increase public spending, or are ousted in favour of a re-invigorated Labour Party, will we know what to do next?

Steve Iliffe

Steve Iliffe is a GP. His book on the NHS is reviewed on p.26.

HEALTH RIGHTS HANDBOOK FOR MATERNITY CARE

Can my husband/partner stay with me during my labour?

Can I have natural birth?

Must I have an ultrasound scan?

What can I do if I am not happy about the care I am receiving?

All these questions and more are answered in the booklet. Available from:

Community Rights Project
157 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8XF
Tel: 01-928 0080

Price £1.30 incl p&p

Myopia and mental health

IN EALING, there is a brand-new Secure Unit for dangerous, mentally-ill patients standing empty. At St Nicolas Hospital in Newcastle, a day-care unit for elderly patients with mental problems has been postponed. Across the Pennines, a 35-place psychiatric day-hospital in the Wirral has been closed 'temporarily'. In Hartlepool, last month, the District Health Authority announced that 18 beds for patients in acute mental crisis in the General Hospital's psychiatric ward have been cut. These are just four recent examples of Tory policy affecting different kinds of mentally-ill patients.

In 1980, government spending on mental health was £866.7m, and projections were for ½ per cent increase per annum. The Mental health charity, MIND, estimates that there must be a 1 per cent increase simply to stand still. The Tories are also committed to closing many large mental hospitals in favour of 'community care' – a policy MIND and most mental health professionals support. But to do this properly will cost another £100m a year. Norman

Class and illness

The 1974-79 Labour government recognised that the principle of free health care for all was not enough to guarantee reasonable equality in health. In 1977 the Resource Allocation Working Party (RAWP) reported on the regional inequalities in NHS funding and set up a formula for allocating more money each year to the relatively poorer parts of the country. Also in 1977 Douglas Black, the retiring chief scientist at the DHSS, was appointed to analyse the extent and causes of differences in the 'health status' of social classes.

His report found that twice as many babies of unskilled working-class parents died at birth or in the first month of life, and over four times as many in the first year, and that this disparity continued throughout life. Working-class boys were ten times more likely to die from accidents. Inequality seemed 'more marked than in some comparable countries, and in certain respects has been becoming more marked'. The report concluded that there was unequal access to the NHS, and that class, poverty and deprivation were major causes of ill-health. The report recommended increased maternity grant, child benefit, infant care allowances and free school meals, along with a better prevention programme (particularly on cigarettes) and more research.

The Conservatives rejected the report when it was published in 1980, and attempted to suppress it (260 photocopied typescripts were made available over the August Bank Holiday). Patrick Jenkin, the Secretary of State for Social Services, described the recommendations as 'unrealistic' and said implementing them would cost over £2 billion a year, although he also ignored the many minor and cheaper recommendations. The Labour Party conference in October 1980 passed a resolution supporting the report. □

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Fowler will give no such commitment: they're going to do it 'on the cheap'.

Since the 1959 Mental Health Act, successive governments have been committed to developing a new community mental health service. The arguments that mental illness is best treated by *local* day-hospitals and psychiatric wards rather than Victorian asylums have all been won. And in the 1970s, with increasing problems of stress, depression, etc, particularly of the elderly, the opportunity, unusual in the NHS, to completely redesign health-care for the mentally ill was recognised by a Labour White Paper (1975), a DHSS 'Priorities' document (1976) and the NHS Royal Commission (1978-9). The Thatcher Government has fully accepted the proposals of these reports in their paper *'Care in the Community'* (1981). Indeed, the Health Minister, Patrick Jenkin, in a 1980 letter to the Royal College of Psychiatrists promised to rate mental illness as 'a priority even in a period of retrenchment'. Four weeks ago, Lord Glenarthur, a DHSS Minister with special responsibility for mental health, claimed that present community-care policy didn't mean cost-cutting. Yet it's quite clear that this is exactly what it means.

● **Chronic and Acute:** As with most other areas of the NHS, people in emergency get most resources. But with mental illness, it is the chronically ill that need to be a priority, before they become acutely ill. It is, however, politically easier to chop resources like day-hospitals, etc, for the chronics. The result of these cuts will be that the number of patients receiving non-emergency care will decrease, in the short-term. Chronically-ill patients don't disappear – they will emerge in some years' time as statistics in increasing suicides, down-and-outs, alcoholism, etc. They can then be explained away as general social problems, not medical ones.

On average in 1980, 75,200 beds a day were occupied by the mentally ill. This is approximately one-quarter of all hospital beds in use.

Two-thirds of all admissions to hospital of mentally ill people are re-admissions.

Three-fifths of all hospital mental patients are women.

In 1981 there were 4,907 places in day centres for the mentally ill.

● **Community Care:** In the longer term, treating patients in small local units will be as cheap, probably cheaper, than in large institutions. But not in the short term, because of the capital cost of creating new centres. *But* it's politically easier to postpone units, to build, for example, one rather than three hostels in a city, than to sack existing staff in large institutions.

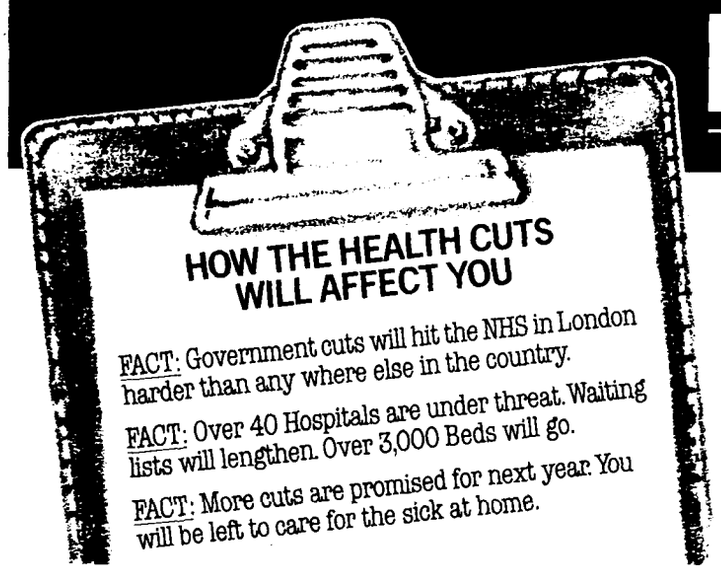
In the US, the closure of mental hospitals with no alternatives has led to highly disturbed ex-patients roaming the streets – or being shut up in institutions with punitive regimes. Julian Leff, Consultant Psychiatrist at Friern Barnet Hospital in North London, whose closure was announced two months ago, predicts that the same will happen in London. The Friern closure is being implemented by allocating only £9m per year for community facilities – as opposed to the £22m considered necessary by the districts concerned.

Out of 1,000 people, 250 will suffer from psychiatric symptoms at some time in their life, but only 23 will go on hospital records, and 140 will be given tranquillisers by their GP. No official statistics relate mental illness to other forms of 'socially disruptive' behaviour. With unemployment, greater family and work stress, mental suffering is increasing.

David Berry

RING THE GLC HEALTH EMERGENCY NUMBER 633 8523.

WHO WILL CARE FOR YOU WHEN LONDON'S HEALTH SERVICE BLEEDS?


HOW THE HEALTH CUTS WILL AFFECT YOU
FACT: Government cuts will hit the NHS in London harder than any where else in the country.
FACT: Over 40 Hospitals are under threat. Waiting lists will lengthen. Over 3,000 Beds will go.
FACT: More cuts are promised for next year. You will be left to care for the sick at home.

Over 4,000 of the total 5,000 NHS jobs they want to cut are in London – that's over 75%.

What can you do? Get involved in the campaign to defend the NHS.

Health emergency campaigns are springing up across London. The GLC are backing these, but it needs you to join in your local campaign.

Ring 633 8523 to find out what's happening in your area, and how you can help. (Or write to Dept. HQ, The County Hall, York Road, London SE1 7PB).

Scream before the cuts hurt. GLC

Cares about London's Health

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Managing to cope

THE REORGANISATION of the NHS in 1982, removing the tier of area health authorities, was intended to save £30 million a year, but the number of administrative and clerical staff has in fact risen slightly. And because 2,600 people took advantage of early retirement payments, rather than the planned 435, the immediate costs of reorganisation were £37 million more than expected.

Since 1970 Conservative governments have been obsessed with the need for better 'management' in the NHS, but there is no evidence that their successive attempts to reorganise NHS *structure* have had any effect in improving NHS *services*. The main driving force behind the improved performance of the NHS since 1976 appears to have been the introduction of cash limits, which forced health authorities to decide their priorities and gave health service administrators some leverage against the power of the senior consultants.

In 1970 the Conservative government took over Labour proposals for a unified structure for what were then three separate health services – hospitals, GPs and 'community' services – and added an emphasis on 'management'. The Conservatives also watered down the element of local democracy in the new structure, with the democratic element largely confined to Community Health Councils. The proposals, which dated originally from 1962, had been moulded by local government reorganisation plans, and involved 90 Area Health Authorities (AHAs), equivalent to the new counties. These were too large to be responsive to local needs but too small for effective strategic planning.

The Labour government, elected two months before NHS reorganisation was due to take place in 1974, did nothing to alter the proposals and presided fairly unenthusiastically over the ensuing chaos. Criticism concentrated on the fact that administration had increased, without improving the quality of planning or accountability. For the Conservatives, returned in 1979, this simply meant business management methods should be introduced.

In 1982, the AHAs were abolished, and responsibility devolved to the Districts – smaller but still undemocratic bodies.

IN FEBRUARY 1983, Roy Griffiths, the managing director of the Sainsbury's grocery chain, was appointed to advise Norman Fowler on NHS management. His report, published last month, put the emphasis on 'getting the structure right' from the point of view of management, rather than on the nature of the services.

The report recommends the elevation of people in the existing NHS structure to take 'direct and personal responsibility' for management. These will be the chairpersons of RHAs and DHAs and their appointees who will act as chief executives of the authorities. At the top of the NHS structure Griffiths provides Fowler with the apparatus for enforcing more central control, setting up two new national bodies to 'supervise' and 'manage' the NHS.

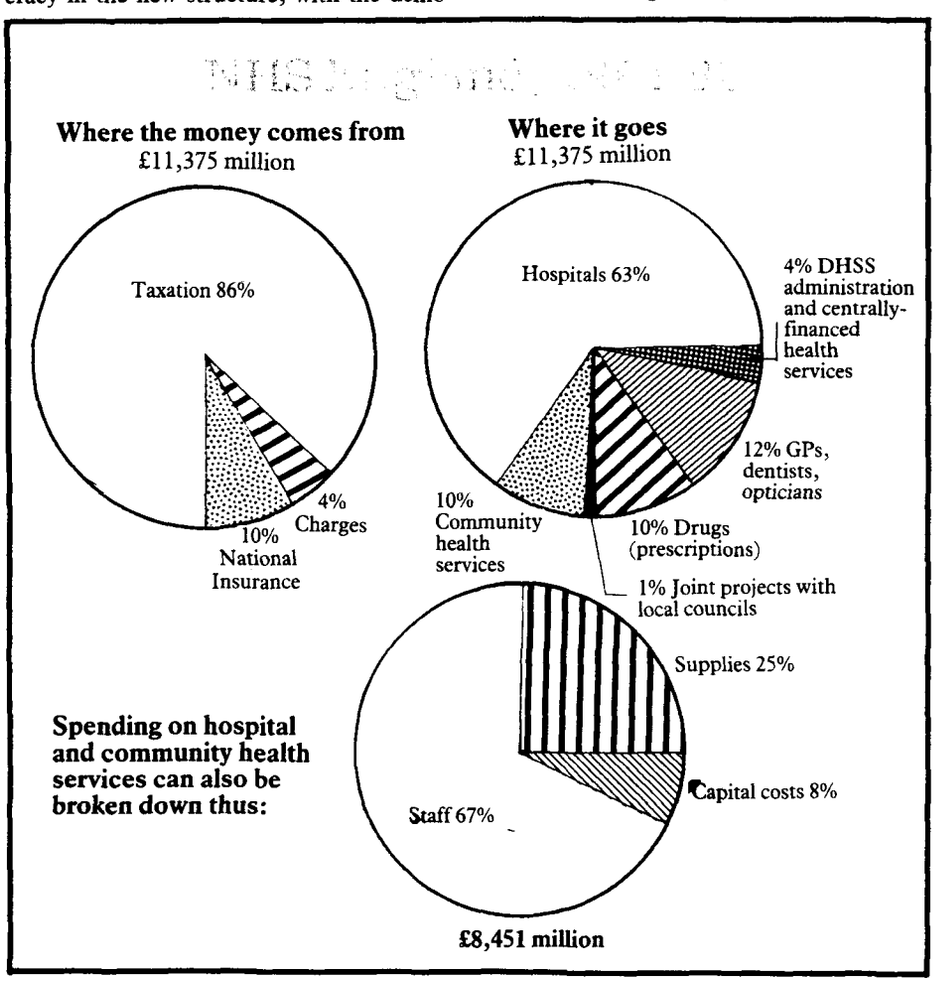
Fowler has accepted the report's recommendations, without consultation or debate in Parliament, and wants them implemented in April 1984. This is a U-turn on the government's policy as expressed in *Patients First* (1980), which came out against the idea of chief executives. The effects will be increasing centralisation, more bureaucracy at the top of the NHS and a downgrading of the only element of democratic representation in the NHS hierarchy – the minority (25 per cent) of DHA members appointed by local councils. There will also be civil war between individuals and professions competing for the 'chief executive' posts (Griffiths calls them 'general managers').

The argument centres on the role of 'consensus management' which is the way most major management decisions (as opposed to policy decisions of the DHAs) are taken. This means that representatives of doctors, nurses, the administrator and the treasurer must all agree, and that any one has a veto over any particular decision. Obviously this can be cumbersome, although it has advantages in maintaining collective commitment and participation. The system is the legacy of the 'historic compromise' negotiated by Bevan with the medical profession in 1946, as the price of their voluntary participation in the creation of the NHS, in which the professional independence of the medical profession was guaranteed. The result is a lack of control of costs. Even the obtaining of financial information in the NHS is difficult.

Griffiths avoids facing this fundamental issue, leaving it to be fought out in hundreds of power struggles between doctors, administrators and accountants. The report recommends that DHA chairpersons should appoint as general managers 'the best person for the job, regardless of discipline'. If this results in breaking the stranglehold of the medical profession over the procedural aspects of medical practice it would be a worthwhile achievement, although it might not be the best way of going about it.

But the real potential for a 'better' more 'efficient' health service lies in a proper assessment of grass-roots priorities (such as care in the home, prevention, education, assisted mutual and self help) and more participation by 'the community'. Griffiths gives a reluctant nod to such an approach in one short paragraph at the end of the report: 'It is impossible to review the NHS without appreciating the major social factors which cause excessive demand on the NHS.' Perhaps this should have been the starting point of his inquiry, rather than an aside at the end of it.

John Rentoul



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When an increase is a cut

In 1983/84, the government is planning to spend 4.9 per cent *more* than last year. This increase would have paid for effects of inflation (4 per cent) and NHS wage increases – the nurses and ancillaries got a 4.5 per cent pay rise this year and the doctors get an 8.7 per cent rise in January – except that the GPs' drugs bill was underfunded. So in the middle of the financial year £131 million was transferred from the main NHS budget (for hospitals and community health services) to pay for GPs' drugs. The effect of this was a 1 per cent *cut* in the main NHS budget, comparing planned spending for this year with actual spending in 1982/83.

But the cuts fall unequally, because the main NHS budget is being adjusted, year by year, in order to

- Take resources away from rich areas (the South East) and redistribute them to poorer areas by a system called RAWP (see glossary pX), and the 'inner city bias.
- Take resources away from 'overfunded' services and devote more to the so-called 'cinderella' services, such as mental illness and care of the very old.

The original intention was that growth in NHS resources would provide for these impoverished areas of services, but within a static or reduced budget, these redistributive processes mean deep cuts for those areas of best quality service.

More money is needed every year, in real terms, to pay for Britain's aging population (although the number of elderly will level off after about 1990) and for inevitable medical innovation. The DHSS admits (in *Health care and its Costs*, 1983) that:

- 0.7 per cent a year more is needed for hospital and community health services: 'If the NHS nationally had failed to deliver extra services of at least that amount standards would have dropped.'
- 0.5 per cent a year more 'is necessary as a contribution to the constant process of medical innovation'.

But the government's long-term spending plans assume a growth of only 0.5 per cent a year on NHS spending until 1990.

Staff cuts, announced by Norman Fowler at the end of September, involve the loss on paper – or rather on the DHSS computer – of 4,800 jobs, comparing March 1983 with March 1984. But because many authorities were understaffed in March 1983 – either to save money for urgent projects this year or as a result of the 1982 reorganisation – many more jobs, planned and paid for out of this year's budget, will also be lost. The cuts vary over the country from 1.7 per cent in North West Thames to a 1.2 per cent *increase* in East Anglia averaging out at a 0.6 per cent cut over the country. But they are particularly nonsensical because Fowler has specified how many employees each RHA may have – so that North West Thames will end up with spare cash that it is not allowed to spend, whereas East Anglia will not have any spare money with which to employ its extra staff – because it has already decided its budgets and how many staff it can afford to employ this year.

Next year (1984/85), the government plans to spend £15.4 billion on the NHS, an increase of about 5.3 per cent. Most of this will be taken up by wage increases and inflation (expected to be between 5 and 6 per cent next year), but the government calculates that it will still leave a 1 per cent real increase in resources, which will make up for this year's cut, but won't provide a penny for necessary growth. But this depends, crucially, on next year's pay norm of 3 per cent, to which NUPE and COHSE are already implacably opposed. There is also, of course, no guarantee that the government will not change the figures in the middle of the next financial year, as they did this year. □

Popularity of the NHS

IN THE past six months, the number of people concerned about the future of the NHS has trebled. The commitment of British people to their welfare services has solidified.

Each month MORI asks a representative sample of almost 2,000 electors which they think are the most important issues facing Britain. Except very briefly during the Falklands crisis, unemployment has dominated responses for more than two years – named by 80 per cent – but in the past year health and disarmament have attracted the concern of growing numbers. These are recent figures for those saying that the NHS is an important issue:

5-11 May	8%
16-20 June	11%
21-25 July	11%
18-22 August	14%
22-26 September	17%
20-24 October	26%

Four weeks ago MORI conducted a poll specifically on the NHS for the *Sunday Times*. It found that 71 per cent were satisfied with the treatment they received from the NHS, while 23 per cent were dissatisfied. (Seven per cent said 'don't know'.)

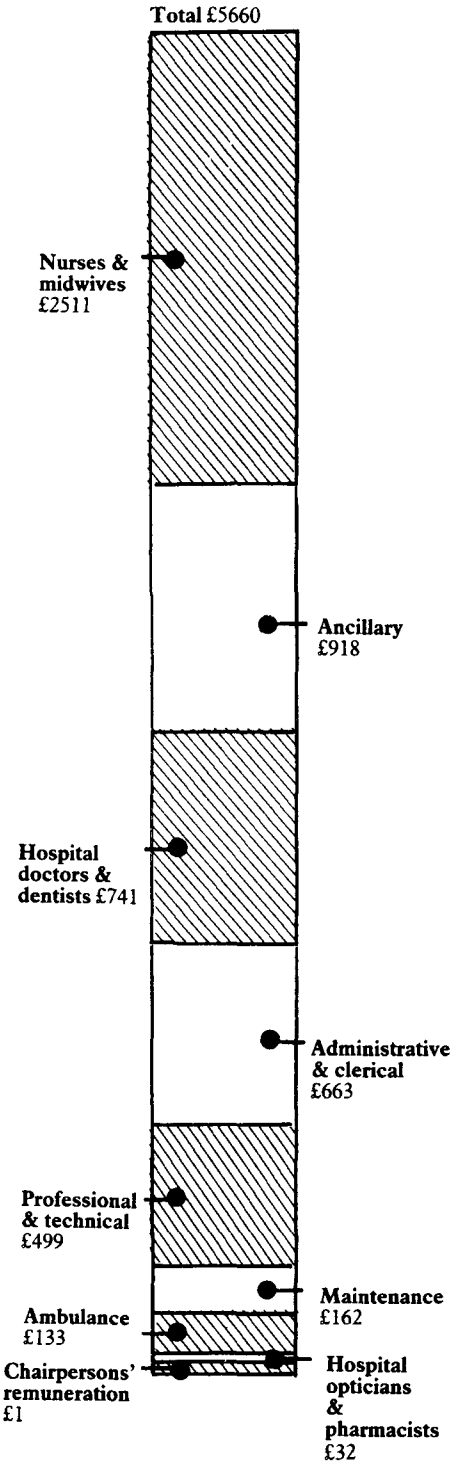
The same poll found a clear majority – 59 per cent – believed the government should *not* encourage people to use private hospitals and take out private health insurance, rather than use the NHS. Thirty-four thought the government should provide such encouragement: again 7 per cent said 'don't know'.

Health is now clearly the favourite candidate for receiving any extra funds that may become available for public spending. MORI's poll asked which *three* items the government should spend more on if it could increase its spending; and, conversely, which three items the government should spend less on if it had to cut its spending.

Health came top with a net score of +55 per cent (59 per cent said the government should spend more; 4 per cent said the government should spend less.) Other plus scores were: education +41, pensions +37, job training for the unemployed +12, housing +11. Minus scores were: police −1, child benefits −5, social security benefits −6, roads −17, public transport −24, defence −38.

That MORI question required interviewees to assess public spending priorities. In answer to a free-standing question, put by Gallup for the *Daily Telegraph* last month, 90% said it was important to put more money into the NHS; just 5% disagreed.

More generally Gallup's survey found a three-to-one majority favouring *increasing* taxes to maintain the standards of public services, as opposed to cutting taxes and reducing standards. Only 17 per cent favoured cutting taxes if it meant a reduction in welfare services. □



In 1974, 11.6% of the spending on health service staff went on clerical and administrative workers. By 1980 this had increased to 12.6%.

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Profits of sickness

THE NHS SPENDS about £2,000 million a year on drugs, or 13 per cent of its total budget. About three-quarters of this expenditure is on drugs prescribed by GPs, and the rest is mostly on drugs used in hospitals. The price at which chemists buy from the drugs companies is fixed by agreement between the drug companies and the DHSS, and is based on a formula of a 25 per cent return on capital. This compares with a 22 per cent return allowed by the Ministry of Defence for weapons suppliers, and makes the UK drugs industry the most profitable sector after oil and advertising.

If the doctor prescribes a well-known brand name, the chemist is not allowed to supply a cheaper equivalent. The active ingredient of Valium, for example, is diazepam. Valium costs £11.92 per thousand, whereas unbranded diazepam costs just £3. Doctors prescribe Valium because it is heavily advertised, patients have heard of it, and the name is easy to remember.

The drug companies spend three times as much on advertising as the average for British industry in terms of a proportion of turnover: £120 million in 1981/82. The drug companies have one salesperson for every GP in the UK, and the average family doctor gets over 1 cwt of advertising materials a month, including about 40 free magazines packed with drugs advertisements.

The reasons for this are obvious: the drugs industry is not only profitable, but expanding. In ICI in 1979, drugs made up 6 per cent of sales and 10 per cent of profits. Drugs giant Glaxo has moved from 11th to 4th place in this year's *Financial Times* 'top companies' survey. It is also big business for the multinationals: 54 of the 65 companies supplying the NHS are foreign-based, and supply two thirds of NHS drugs. It is very likely that the multinationals' British profits are understated by means of 'transfer pricing' between subsidiaries and parent companies.

Drug company profits are not easy to estimate, because a 25 per cent return on 'capital employed' is not the same as a percentage of sales. An investigation by the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee (PAC) in May this year suggested that the drug companies made about 17 per cent profit on sales, which would amount to over £300 million this year. In addition, the PAC suggested that up to £200 million profit could be concealed by 'transfer pricing.' The PAC recommended that the 25 per cent formula should be reduced, but the government has refused. If the 25 per cent were reduced to 17 per cent, as the PAC recommends, this would save the NHS about £65 million a year – or half the spending cut imposed on health authorities by Nigel Lawson after the election.

The government has also rejected the recommendations of the Greenfield report, which Norman Fowler held for a year before reluctantly publishing in January 1983. This proposes – among other things – that the NHS should introduce 'generic substitution'; that is, chemists should be allowed to substitute cheaper versions of the branded drugs prescribed by doctors.

Two studies have indicated the potential for savings. One, reported in the *Daily Telegraph* in November 1979, showed that £25 million could be saved by substituting unbranded versions of 13 leading drugs which cost the NHS £60 million in 1978. Another, by Alan Smith in a paper for the Pharmaceutical Society in January this year found that substitution of just 11 products would save £29 million in 1982 prices, on current NHS patterns of use. The 11 included Valium, Mogadon and Panadol (known 'generically' as diazepam, nitrazepam and paracetamol). Estimates of the total savings possible through substituting unbranded drugs go as high as £170 million a year.

1979 Health expenditure in developed countries, by GNP

Country	per capita £	% GNP
USA	405	9.0
Netherlands	357	8.6
Australia	278	7.6
Norway	356	7.6
Denmark	345	7.4
France	327	7.2
Switzerland (1977)	394	6.9
Italy (1976)	107	6.3
W Germany	280	5.7
UK	162	5.4
Japan	171	4.4

The drugs companies (the Association of British Pharmaceutical Industry, address 19 Whitehall, London) have lobbied the government just as hard over the Greenfield Report as over the direct attack on their profits by the PAC. They say the savings to be made by substituting unbranded drugs would be very small (this is Norman Fowler's official reason for rejecting the report), but try to have it both ways by saying that it would damage their profits and vital research and development of new drugs would suffer.

But most drugs research is not medically justifiable. Drs Diggie and Griffin in the *British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology* estimated that only a third of the 200 new drugs produced in any one year were in any way genuinely innovative. The rest were so-called 'me too' drugs, developed by drugs companies to be able to patent a different formulation of an already-available 'generic' drug. These are often more costly to develop than genuine advances in pharmacology.

In fact, the government has already accepted the case for generic substitution, and is being held back only by the immense lobbying power of the ABPI. It is DHSS policy to encourage doctors to prescribe by generic rather than brand names, and 22 per cent of all prescriptions are already generic. Most hospitals in the UK have 'formularies', which are lists of about 250 drugs out of the 20,000 or so currently on the market. Hospital pharmacists are allowed to dispense generic equivalents when doctors order brand name drugs. □

Defend the NHS

Health workers everywhere are fighting to save our health service from the onslaught of Government manpower and spending cuts.

At stake are hundreds of hospitals threatened with closure; at stake, too, are thousands of jobs as the Tories sell off ancillary jobs to private firms, putting profits before patient care.

COHSE stop health cuts fighting for patients & staff

Confederation of Health Service Employees
General Secretary David Williams
Glen House, High Street, Banstead, Surrey
SM7 2LH - Tel (07373) 53322

COHSE: Britain's Health Service Union

The following people have contributed material to this supplement: Sarah Benton; David Berry; Ben Griffiths; Steve Iliffe; Peter Kellner; Jeanette Mitchell; John Rentoul; Jerry Shulman; Jane Thomas.

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Paid pipers

SPENDING ON private medicine is still only just over 1 per cent of spending on the NHS. But this figure does not evaluate the impact of private medicine on NHS resources. For instance, private medicine contributes nothing to the costly training of medical and nursing staff. The greatest loss to the NHS is in **consultants' time** and facilities. Neither 'full-time' NHS consultants nor part-time consultants can satisfactorily divide their private from their public selves. Hospital routines have to be devised around the consultants' distribution of their time; NHS office and administrative resources are used by the private as well as the NHS patient. NHS facilities are 'borrowed'.

The growth of private medicine, however small it still is, undoubtedly creates a two-tier system. As the BMA itself recently warned, well-resourced private medicine will siphon off the 'exciting' and pioneering work, leaving an increasingly shabby NHS to deal with geriatrics, the mentally ill and handicapped, the chronically ill and incurable.

From December 1977 to February 1983 the number of **private hospitals** increased by 30 per cent and the number of beds in them by 37 per cent. By February there were 160 private hospitals with 7,600 beds. Most private hospitals are tiny – one-third have fewer than 30 beds, two-thirds have fewer than 50 and only one in ten has more than 100 beds. (Only hospitals with 100 beds or more come under the authority of the Health Service Board.) The hospitals are owned by a variety of organisations. Religious orders still own nearly 30; nearly 60 are run by charities including the British Pregnancy Advisory Service (six) and the Nuffield Nursing Home Trust which was set up by BUPA in 1957 (31). American corporations are increasingly moving in, at present owning 17 hospitals here. British companies and individuals account for the rest.

Meanwhile, the Conservatives have quietly increased the number of **pay beds** in NHS hospitals by 22 per cent to 2,930 last year. In 1981 these beds were used by 97,000 patients. Ironically, however, privatisation of **ancillary services** has not so far increased under the Conservatives. Between 1979 and 1983 the contracting out of laundry services fell from 14.1 per cent to 11.7 per cent, of domestic and cleaning services from 2.4 per cent to 2.1 per cent. This is because private contractors can rarely do the work better and more cheaply.

Apart from the increase in pay beds, the Conservatives' biggest gift to private medicine has been in allowing full-time NHS consultants to earn up to 10 per cent of their salary from private practice. Forty-seven per cent of consultants only hold part-time contracts. The amount of private practice available varies greatly by speciality and by region. **Eighty-two per cent of specialists in general surgery are part-time compared with just 9 per cent in mental handicap and 5 per cent in geriatric medicine.** Sixty-five per cent of consultants in the North East Thames region are part-time – compared with 28 per cent in the northern region. The impact of private medicine is most strongly felt in London, where private patients receive the most advanced treatment from the most prestigious consultants in the best equipped private hospitals on the prime sites.

About three-quarters of private patients are covered by **medical insurance.** BUPA and the other companies now have 4.2 million people enrolled, or 7 per cent of the population. In 1981 just under half the subscribers were enrolled through policies bought by their employers; a further 24 per cent had bought cut-price 'groups' policies, such as those being promoted at the taxpayer's expense in the civil service; and the remaining 28 per cent paid the full rate.

However, the rate of increase in new subscribers to insurance schemes has slowed – from 26 per cent new members in 1980 to 3 per cent more in 1982. Fees in private hospitals have more than doubled in the last four years; BUPA's premiums went up by about one third last year. While the lengthening waiting lists in the NHS increase custom for private medicine, the new customers cannot afford to pay for it – unless substantial new tax concessions are made to them.

Ben Griffiths

May 1983: "I have no... intention of dismantling the National Health Service..."
Margaret Thatcher, general election campaign

Now: At least 4,800 health jobs to go by March; 10-year squeeze on NHS cash

DEFEND THE NHS

NUPE

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Campaigns

NATIONAL

COMMUNITY HEALTH COUNCILS (Nat Assoc) 362 Euston Rd, London NW1 3BL 01-388 4814 Tony Smythe.
LABOUR PARTY 'Save our health service' 150 Walworth Rd, London SE17 01-703 0833 Joyce Gould.
MIND (Nat Assoc for Mental Health) 22 Harley St, London W1 01-637 0741.
NHS UNLIMITED (Resource base for campaigns against private medicine) Frank Dobson MP, House of Commons, London SW1 01-219 4452.
'NURSE ALERT' (Royal College of Nursing monitoring the cuts campaign – report due early 1984) 01-409 2583 Sue Barnett.
PATIENTS ASSOCIATION, 18 Charing Cross Rd, London WC2 01-240 0671.
SOCIALIST HEALTH ASSOCIATION 195 Walworth Rd, London SE17 1RP 01-703 6838/01-346 5867 Audrey Thomas.
TUC Health Services Committee, Congress House, Great Russell St, London WC1B 3LS 01-636 4030 Peter Jacques.
Campaigns are forming all over the country, most of them aiming to link trade unions with NHS and public bodies. To be put in touch with your local campaign phone the Joint Union Organiser in your Regional Health Authority area.
N. IRELAND Campaign against Profiteering in the Health Service. T. Carlin, Northern Ireland Office of Irish Congress of Trades Unionists, 9 Castle Arcade, Belfast 1, 0232-241452.
SCOTLAND *Scottish TUC* Bill Speirs, 16 Woodlands Terr, Glasgow 041-332 4946.

Committee to Defend the NHS, Lin Jones, 69 Gilmore Pl, Edinburgh 031-229 4898.
WALES Joint Health Service Unions/TUC Co-ordinating Committee. David Jenkins 0222-371495. (Local committees forming in the nine DHAs).
NORTHERN (Northumbs, Durham, Cleveland, Cumbria) Bob Howard 0632-616934.
YORKSHIRE (N Yorks, Humberside, S Yorks, W Yorks) Sean Hilliard 0532-537654.
Leeds Area Anti-cuts Committee Stewart Roden 0532-534358.
Bradford Strategy for Health Grp Mike Crippen 0274-725046.
Sheffield Health Care Strategy Grp Colin Tunhurst 0742-20911, (h) 0742-71986.
N. WESTERN & MERSEYSIDE (Lancs, Gtr Manchester, Cheshire) Colin Barnett 061-3082821.
Liverpool Labour Party Campaign in process of forming: Alex Scott Samuel 051-227 4300.
Manchester Labour Party campaign in process of forming: Nick Harris 061-795 9740.
Wigan Health Defence Committee Mr W. Dunne 061-883 9545.
TRENT (Lincs, Notts, Derbys, Staffs, Leics) P. Quinn 0602-795739.
Stafford Campaign to Defend NHS Philip Parker 0785-47066.
W MIDLANDS (Shrops, Hereford/Worcs, Glos) Gordon Will 021-350 0777 or Bryn Evans 021-643 6084.
S WESTERN (Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Avon, S Glos) Ty Taylor 0823-78411.
Devon against the cuts Ian Duckett 0392-34001.
Dorset against the cuts George Cox 0702-611551/2.
Who Cares – Cornwall Ken Terry 0637-830055.
WESSEX (Dorset, Hants, Wilts, IoW) Paul O'Shea 0734-596466.
Southampton Health Care Campaign Steve Ferris (h) 0703-558677; (w) 0703-777222, x 3698.
Portsmouth Health District Campaign Bob Aberley 0252-331602.
OXFORD (Berks, Bucks, Beds, Northants) Clive Linnard 0734-596355.
Who Cares Campaign (Joint TU Cttee) Organiser Phil Fryer 0865-244466.
This campaign has produced a charter for democracy in the NHS and a campaign kit.
E ANGLIA (Norfolk, Suffolk, northern NW Thames & NE Thames & N Essex) Greg Grant 0245-87524.
NW/NE/SW/THAMES (W Sussex, E Sussex, Kent, Surrey, S Essex, Herts) Tony Gould 01-636 4030, x 165.
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Glossary

Ancillary workers the 'support staff' of porters, cleaners, caterers and launderers.
AHA Area Health Authority, a tier of organisation abolished in 1982.
Black Report a report on 'Inequalities in Health'. See page IV.
BMA British Medical Association, the professional body for all doctors (GPs and hospital doctors), and one of the strongest pressure groups in the country.
CHC Community Health Council, one for each DHA, members 50 per cent appointed by local council, 33 per cent by voluntary organisations, 17 per cent by the RHA; they have few resources and are disliked by the government, although the Griffiths Report was 'impressed' by their grass-roots work.
Community health services a term covering the non-hospital services provided by health authorities which take up about 14 per cent of their spending: health visitors, child health clinics, the schools service, family planning clinics, home nursing, non-surgery-based dental services, ambulances and blood transfusion services.
COHSE Confederation of Health Service Employees, one of the two big unions in the NHS, with 230,000 members; new general secretary David Williams.
DHSS Department of Health and Social Security, the central government department responsible for the NHS, created in 1968 for Richard Crossman; Norman Fowler, the Secretary of State for Social Services has overall responsibility for the NHS and the social security system, whereas Kenneth Clarke, the Minister for Health has specific responsibility for the NHS.
DHA District Health Authority, of which there are 183 in England and a further 9 in Wales, members 75 per cent appointed by the RHA, 25 per cent by the local council, the chairperson is appointed by the Secretary of State; they are responsible for all the health services in the district, and in particular for overseeing the management of hospitals.
DMT District Management Team, the doctor, nurse, administrator and accountant (treasurer) responsible for managing the health services in a district.
FPC *either* Family Practitioner Committee, responsible for overseeing GPs, dentists and opticians in a district, half of the members are non-medical, 11 nominated by the DHA and 4 by the local council;
or Family Planning Clinic.
GP General Practitioner, a non-specialist doctor working in a surgery (over 75 per cent in group practices).
Griffiths Report report of the Inquiry Team headed by Roy Griffiths, managing director of Sainsbury's, into NHS management, published in October 1983.
Health Services Supervisory Board (HSSB) body at the head of the NHS, chaired by the Secretary of State, to be set up on the recommendation of the Griffiths Report in April 1984.
Manpower DHSS word for staffing; about 70 per cent of the NHS's million employees are women.
NHS Management Board executive team in charge of the NHS, to be chaired by a 'new man' from the business world, to be set up on the recommendation of the Griffiths Report in April 1984.
NUPE National Union of Public Employees, one of the two big unions in the NHS with about 230,000 health service workers and 700,000 members altogether; general secretary, Rodney Bickerstaffe.
RHA Regional Health Authority, of which there are 14 in England, whose members and chairpersons are appointed – and sacked – by the Secretary of State; responsible for strategic planning in the region, big capital projects (e.g. building new hospitals), blood transfusion services and in the metropolitan counties the ambulance services.
RAWP Resource Allocation Working Party, which designed a formula for redistributing NHS resources 'responsive objectively, equitably and efficiently to relative need' in 1977; since then health services in the 'overprovided' South-East (the area covered by the four Thames regions) have been cut.

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Bill Greenwell

That certain smile

CARTOONISTS refresh those parts that print never reaches. They slip into jugs of the strong stuff dashes of fizz, which are apt to evaporate unless used sparingly – which is why, I reckon, they make more mark in the pages of *Private Eye* than in *Punch*. In his intro to **The Penguin Book of Private Eye Cartoons** (£2.95), Richard Ingrams admits to the odd private squint at a cardboard box of cartoon roughs:

> In the fifty to a hundred drawings that come in the course of a fortnight, there will be at least three or four that will bring a smile to my lips. That, I should add, is my only criterion.

Not a bad criterion at that. But this is Christmas (nearly) and browsers are, as ever, confronted by thumping piles of cartoon anthologies.

What will bring that certain smile to Auntie's lips? It is, I'm afraid, all too easy to imagine the sound of a million wrappers ripped apart, the chosen cartoon books bursting out, and the smiles dying on the lips before the first of the turkey sandwiches. When you bung, however deliberately, a bunch of bonzo lip-ripplers together, their original impact is almost always dissipated. One of only two survivors from these jumbo editions is the *Eye*'s Kevin Woodcock. Significantly his images are never augmented by words. They have a solemn, angular absurdity of their own, and one image in the *Eye* collection is certainly for ever stamped on the Greenwell grey cell. It is of an archway towering over a moderately busy street. Perched on the arch are outsize ornaments: a suburban mantelpiece set impishly down in a new context. Smiles did not merely limp to my lips; I laughed out loud.

But now consult Glen Baxter's **The Impending Gleam** (Fontana, £2.95). Even supposing yourself to be a Baxterphile, which I confess I'm not, you will probably still find this collection accentuating the witless weekly pattern of his tactics. You tag a ridiculously inappropriate, mock-serious statement to an image apparently nicked from a Forties or Fifties comic annual. The image, which looks like a photocopy, is quietly altered to fit the chosen epithet. Thus: a maid at a girls' boarding school opens a bristling drawer while two uniformed pupils peek through the curtains. Caption: 'Miranda had stumbled upon our supply of beards.' Incongruity is the stuff of which cartoons are made, but to have the images dinned into you like this is to bring on a serious attack of lip seizure.

And – here I shall have to be recklessly disloyal – the same, rather dispiriting effect is brought about by Claire Bretécher's **More Frustration** (Methuen, £3.95). Once again,

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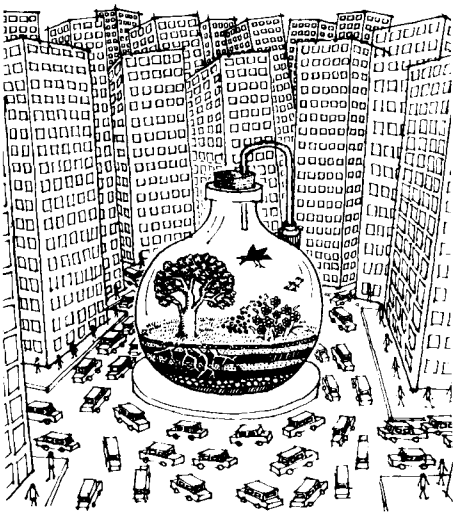

From Kevin Woodcock's collection 'City Rules OK' (Unwin Paperbacks, £1.95)

I'm not a committed fan anyway; however, I recognise that her glum, lumpy figures, bleary eyes above their black pouches, with the tatty underwear or not, are potentially addictive. But, like Posy, she seems to me a taste that one loses rather than acquires. Her best strips are silent; I find the words get in my way. And to collect her work only proves that there's rarely such a thing as a bundle of laughs. Bryan Reading's **The Belchers** (formerly of *Vole*, published by Blandford Press at 0.95p) offers further proof that jokes about the pseudo-intellectual are rapidly running out of hot air. You grin, you grin again, you grimace and riffle through the rest, stick it on a shelf, and its existence comes to a standstill.

Do I sound a mite glum? A misery-guts? I'm afraid so. Because it's down the chute, too, with Ralph Edney's **Lazarus Lamb in the Riddle of the** – get ready – **Sphincter** (Pluto, £2.95). Hee. Laz is an urban oik with existential problems following a familiar pattern:

a) This is a send-up
b) of a parody of
c) a pseudo-serious travesty of
d) Important Issues, which by
e) trivialising, we turn back into
f) Important Issues, which we should consider
g) Important.

Edney's cartoons are separate items pinned together into a strip – like some sharp, satirical imitation of Raymond Briggs. The difference is that Briggs is deliberately funny instead of being self-consciously conscious about being self-consciously funny. The onion, parody, just hasn't that many layers.

It's Steve Bell's **The If . . . Chronicles** (Methuen, £2.50) which are the definitive exception to any rules you may have perceived emerging from this article. *If . . .* is actually better as a collection. Incongruities there are a-plenty – as in the notorious penguin's cousin, who sports a Marty Wilde quiff, and burbles irrelevant dooby-woppa-doos – but *If . . .* 's punch is also firmly

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packed. Nor is Bell mysterious; there is no pretension; and constant variety. His targets keep moving, and casts are always subject to late change – hence its success as a collection. He also has the subtle crudity so many other cartoon satirists lack.

One senses terrible time and trouble went into selecting the apparently artless title, **The Punch Book of Kids** (ed. Alan Coren, Robson, £4.95). But why did they have to call it *The Punch Book* of anything? It would be a pity if the pithless title turned away purchasers since it's a wickedly funny selection of articles, spoofs – spooves? – and parodies, essays, memories and the ever-punctual cartoon, perhaps rather too many of the last. Gangs of light genius roam its pages, led by Coren and his most brilliant henchman, Keith Waterhouse. The archives would doubtless yield anthologies closely linking pieces on prawns or even navel-fluff, but childhood – remembered, impersonated, whimsified or roped in for the hell of it – will do. A particular treat is the inclusion of five early appearances of N. Molesworth from the Forties, in which st. custards appears as st. cypranes, and tales of tuoghery cheers cheers are fathefuly rekorded in dairy form.

Simon Brett, meanwhile, attempts the near-impossible in **Molesworth Rites Again** (Hutchinson, £5.95), but brings it off BRILIANTLY. Geoffrey Willans' creation, the inimitable mix of Mitty, Wooster and Bunter, is discovered married to a social climber Louise chiz, with two children chiz chiz, and working not too diligently as an invoice clerk for Grabber Bulk Holdings. Time has repaired the Molesworth prose somewhat, but he spells with familiar creativity, and his flights of dog-eared fancy ('Let me present you with two paralell scenes, both involveing an Estate Agent who combines the seductive power of Salomy with the morals of Atilla the Hun . . . ') are a must. Peason is, incidentally, and predictably, a beer-swilling sexist; Molesworth 2 is a PR man in the rock world; and Fotherington-Thomas – Nigel has learned to use capitals – is 'into macramee and wholefood'. We mite have guest.

James Fenton's revival of Michael Frayn's occasional pieces for the *Guardian* and *Observer* in the Sixties is also to be commended. Deceptively quiet investigations of sundry social entrails, they've hardly dated, and still bring willing, winning grins to the chops. I'm perhaps unduly influenced by the relatively recent arrival of Greenwell Jr. but my eyes exchanged knowing winks at his pieces relating to children, and to the sundry equipment following in both their wake and sleep. Anything from **The Original Michael Frayn** (Salamander Press Edinburgh, £8.50 & £4.95) would win space in the third *Observer* selection, **Sunday Best 3** (ed. Donald Trelford, Gollancz, £8.95). Informed, witty, wise – we'd expect that; but, read away from Sunday's clutter of Sections, they are strikingly patient, pleasant and settling. This anthology can offer lasting pleasure, not least because you can read it without the newsprinter's ink griming your thumbs. □

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ESSAYS
Paul Binding

A tiny memory

Passions and Impressions
PABLO NERUDA
Faber/Farrar, Straus & Giroux £16.50

One of the shorter, and later pieces in this generous anthology of Neruda's occasional writings is entitled 'Far-ranging Beetleology'. This begins with a poem in which Neruda expresses a wish that he had been born a beetle, had burrowed 'deep in dark and compact matter' and 'scrawled' his 'name in hidden patterns/in the agony of the wood'. Because, he imagines, 'Thus my name some distant morning,/would once again see the light of day,/emerging from nocturnal channels'.

These lines surely encapsulate the two dominant – and, more often than not, conflicting – qualities of Neruda's personality as he emerged from the figuratively nocturnal channels of his precocious youth: an instinctive veneration for the mystery of the natural world, and a total inability to lose sight of himself, particularly himself as public figure with mankind's admiring eyes upon him. The essay cited goes on to evoke the fascinations of various beetles that the poet had collected in boyhood; it also gives us a picture of Neruda as celebrated writer, being visited by a Soviet astronaut and by representatives of the press in his island fastness, and thus having his concentration upon the beetle-poem broken. Even if these calls *were* disturbances, they were ones, the reader feels, for which Neruda was amply prepared; indeed they were expected and, to a certain extent, desired.

Passions and Impressions can be seen as an extensive gloss to Neruda's *Memoirs* (called in Spanish, much more revealingly, *Confieso que he vivido* – 'I confess that I have lived') which demonstrate the same conflict and arouse – in me, at any rate – the same emotions.

One of the most interesting, and to the student valuable, sections of *Passions and Impressions* concerns those Spanish-language writers with whom Neruda enjoyed association. There are two obviously deeply-felt tributes to García Lorca, and a number of pieces on Lorca's Spanish contemporaries, the unparalleledly brilliant 'Generation of '27'. Unfortunately self-congratulatory rhetoric breaks out repeatedly to mar their validity as pictures or records. Of the complex surrealist Vicente Aleixandre: 'I set him apart from all other friends, because of the infinite purity of his friendship.' Of Rafael Alberti, close to Neruda in his attitudes to both art and politics: 'Rafael and I have been, to state it simply, brothers.' (Neruda appears to have had a great many literary 'brothers'.) And I turned with great interest

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Philippe Jaccottet

On voit

I see the schoolboys run with great cries
in the thick grass of the playground.

The tall unruffled trees
and the light at ten in September
like a fresh fall
still shelters them from the vast anvil
sparking with stars beyond.

Must the soul, so chill, so fierce,
really walk interminably on this glacier,
alone, with naked feet, no longer knowing how to tell
its childhood prayer,
interminably punished for its coldness by this cold?

Behind the window with the whitewashed frame
(against flies, against ghosts),
an old man's silvery head is bent
over a letter or the local news.
Dark ivy grows against the wall.

Keep him, ivy and lime, from the dawn wind,
from the too long nights and the eternal other.

tr. Stephen Romer

to what Neruda had written about the enigmatic figure of Miguel Hernández whose poems meant so much to Republican Spain and who died in one of Franco's brutal gaols:

> My great friend, Miguel, how I love you, and how I respect and love your strong poetry. Where you may be at this moment, in prison, on the road, dead, is of no consequence.

It was, of course, of very great consequence – most notably to Hernández's bereft young widow and child! But then even the Spain these poets gave their lives for has too often contracted to a stage on which Neruda made his youthful star-performances.

For all his loftiness of mind, for all the undoubted beauty of his frequent apostrophes to Chile, for all that they are the work of the author of the splendid *Alturas de Macchu Picchu*, Pablo Neruda's essays are too often the effusions of a self-important windbag, who surely should have tried rather harder to expel the sham-mantic from his work.

But then one reads the sixth section of this book, 'The Struggle for Justice', and humbly recants one's exasperation. In 1946 Neruda, a prominent member of the Chilean Communist party, had directed the publicity campaign of Señor González Videla, who was duly elected President. González Videla had espoused a most impressive programme of constitutional and social reform, and had guaranteed the inclusion of Communists in his Assembly. Soon after his election he went back on all his promises, serving the interests of the US and the multinationals, allying himself with Franco's Spain (which he had formerly condemned) and unscrupulously repressing all resistance to his *volte-face* with shootings, sudden arrests, concentration camps.

Neruda's stand was unequivocal and exceedingly courageous. Indeed he had to flee the country on account of it. His two major public denunciations of González Videla make both vigorous and moving reading. Paradoxically, where one might expect rhetoric there is none. At these times of crisis Neruda forsook effusion for hard fact. And his literary powers were never more sympathetically revealed than in his descriptions of the wretched living conditions of the abused miners of Southern Chile:

> Official statistics show the horrifying figure of six workers for every bed. At the site they call Pachoco Rojas they operate a 'warm-bed' system. This system – which reveals the terrible tragedy of the Chilean people – consists of a regular turn to use a bed, with the result that for years on end a bed never grows cold.

The same unflinching adherence to humanitarian principle was displayed almost a quarter of a century later in Neruda's relationship to Salvador Allende, whose end almost certainly hastened his own.

So maybe he was entitled to some of his high self-regard after all. And in the tenth anniversary year of Pinochet's despicable regime, brought about by forces Neruda consistently and uncompromisingly attacked, he is worth honouring. No one believed more firmly than he in the cause of peace (to be served by nuclear disarmament), and no one loved his own country more passionately: 'Life and struggle and poetry will live when I am but a tiny memory in the radiant history of Chile.' □

Dora Russell
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Dora Russell's involvement in world affairs spans most of the twentieth century. Her new book has taken 61 years to come to fruition and publication: the first chapter 'The Soul of Russia and the Body of America' was written in 1922. The book as it has finally been written is more topical now than when it was first commissioned in 1923. It is a history of humankind's beliefs and ideas – a defence of humanity's right to survive in this 'machine' age of ours.
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MUSIC BOOKS
Andrew Clements

Ways of life

BIOGRAPHIES of conductors, of all performers indeed, are generally to be avoided like the plague. The greater the artist, the less informative the text seems to become; hard fact is suffocated as image takes over. Yet Peter Heyworth's **Otto Klemperer: His Life and Times** (Cambridge, £15) is the shining exception, fascinating and compelling. Klemperer was not just one of the three greatest conductors of this century; far more clearly than Furtwängler or Toscanini he defined in interpretative terms a crucial period in the music of our time; here was the exponent of *Neues Sachlichkeit*, the analogue of Busoni, Hindemith and neoclassical Stravinsky. Any biography of Klemperer is at once a history of extraordinary times.

Heyworth succeeds magnificently in combining the personal and public. His portrait is frank and utterly thorough; Klemperer's manic depression is painstakingly chronicled, his bewildering *volte-faces* on policy are explained in terms of the phases of his illness. It gives the sense of a whole period, a musical way of life encapsulated; there will be no need for anyone to contemplate a history of the revolutionary Kroll Opera now for Heyworth has done it all for them.

The present volume takes the conductor only up to 1933, when he fled from the Nazis. The years in America, personal misfortunes and the god-like celebrity of old age must wait for its successor; in the meantime we must be content with this study, peopled by some of the greatest musicians of the age.

It's curious that at a time when the flow of music books seems unstemmable, there should still be important subjects waiting for exploration. Until the arrival of Paul Griffiths's **The String Quartet** (Thames and Hudson, £12) there was no compact history of the medium. Griffiths provides an unexceptionable account, which will find a ready market in any college or university where this branch of musical history is on the syllabus. One might have hoped for a more characterful and enlightening chronicle, for there is no suggestion that the author has anything compulsive to say on the subject; it is an unfailingly elegant exegesis, without partiality or obvious sympathy. It comfortably fills a vacant niche, however, and will be a valuable reference text.

Griffiths's industry also brings another new study, this time in the 'Contemporary Composers' series from Robson Books. **György Ligeti** (£8.95) is a short, lucid survey of the work of the most engaging and potentially charismatic of present-day composers. The size and format of the book prevent detailed analysis, nor would such depth be in keeping with a series self-consciously aimed at a non-specialist audience. Griffiths's ability to comprehend Ligeti's oeuvre as a whole, as a single rising curve from the early *Atmosphères* to *Le grand macabre*, is illuminating, though his eloquent defence of the opera surely reads too much into what seems a thin, albeit skilfully contrived score. As postscript there is a brief discussion of the one major work yet to be performed in Britain, the Trio for violin, horn and piano; it suggests new directions in Ligeti's music, greater harmonic and rhythmic complexities to which this study has provided a carefully reasoned background.

Malcolm Boyd's **Bach** (£10.50) in Dent's Master Musician series is an unusually slanted introduction. Anyone looking to the book to discover programmatic detail on major works might be disappointed; Boyd has produced instead a valuable account of the current state of Bach research, its welter of textual and musicological problems. He is particularly stimulating on the importance of the *Goldberg Variations* in the music of Bach's final period, its technical and thematic links with the late masterpieces.

Franz Liszt: The Virtuoso Years 1811-1847 (Faber, £25) is the first volume in a projected series of three by Alan Walker. It looks set to be the definitive biography of Liszt, the product of many years' research into the mass of material surrounding his life. Walker's main task has been to demythologise the composer, to strip away the layers of legend – meetings with Schubert and Beethoven, tales of precociousness – some of them instigated by Liszt himself. He proves to be a scrupulous and fair-minded chronicler, though inclined to repetition and purple prose at times. There is a wealth of contemporary detail, and a generous sprinkling of music examples, even if the emphasis remains on life not works.

The centenary of his death has produced the predictable crop of new studies of Wagner, few of them deserving space or mention. Wagner's own **My Life** (Cambridge, £22.50) in a complete new English translation by Andrew Gray is the most enduring contribution, though the autobiography takes its author only up to his 51st birthday in 1864, rejoicing in the death of his arch-rival Meyerbeer. It is a highly partial, incorrigibly egocentric account, but remains the only available source on Wagner's early life. The translation reads easily and fluently. And most disappointing is the first appearance in English of Martin Gregor-Dellin's **Richard Wagner, His Life, His Work, His Century** (Collins, £17.50), respected in its German original, but utterly destroyed here by the inanities of translation and editing. □

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Quick cuts

WITH THE mixed Master back in the news, what better moment to retrieve Donald Spoto's much-maligned **The Life of Alfred Hitchcock: The Dark Side of Genius** (Collins, £12.95) for serious consideration? Nearly 600 pages of beavering, unprurient research do much to illuminate areas left shadowy by blander biographers and confirm our frequent queasiness as spectators. But, psychopathology apart – sick practical jokes, social and sexual unease, despoliating treatment of Tippi Hedren – and allowance made for an American author's uncertainty around 'Cockney' manners, the book is full of treasures: those *were* technical hitches, not Hitches, after all, in *Marnie*, sheer sloppiness; and that rich autumnal foliage we lauded in *The Trouble with Harry* had to be stuck on to fake trees back at the studio.

Even documentarists 'cheated', of course, as is elaborated in the excellent **Humphrey Jennings: More Than a Maker of Films** (University Press of New England, £15) by Anthony W. Hodgkinson and Rodney E. Sheratsky. Painter, poet, Mass Observer, amateur scholar, upper-middle-class visionary, Jennings could be tough as old boots during his great days with the free-for-all Crown Film Unit in achieving exactly the mix of image and sound he sought. Complete credits and descriptions of his works, including *Listen to Britain* and *Fires Were Started*, make this an essential acquisition. Alongside it should go Dai Vaughan's **Portrait of an Invisible Man** (BFI, £4.95), not merely a loving and arduously assem-

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bled testimony to the elusive Stewart McAllister's huge contribution as more-than-editor to Jennings and others but also a depth-probe into the British documentary movement as a whole.

Scholarship intensifies; and directors came well out of the year. Richard Koszarski's **The Man You Loved to Hate** (Oxford, £7.95) definitively pursues the flamboyant ups-and-downs of Erich von Stroheim, son of a Viennese-Jewish hatter, who imposed himself on a gullible Hollywood as a battle-scarred aristocrat – and actor, writer, creator – to produce a handful of erotic silent classics. Digging deep into studio archives, Koszarski emerges with chapter and verse about intransigent 'Mr Von', whose attempts to ride roughshod over restrictions of budget and length led to inevitable mutilations of his original concepts (the grandiose *Greed* suffering most) and a fall from favour redeemed for memory by two or three unforgettable acting stints. Gerald Mast's **Howard Hawks, Storyteller** (Oxford, £16.50) is sane criticism at its finest, rescuing this supreme pragmatist to whom 'fun' was paramount, from his detractors and wider-eyed worshippers alike. A fruitful proposal, that the Hawksian 'narrative machines' work through an instinctive collapsing of such facile oppositions as male-female, body-spirit, work-play, child-adult, human-animal, word-deed and love-friendship, is never allowed to straitjacket the author from other insights: for example, the crucial use of archetypal stars like Grant and Wayne. Reasonably enough, *Red River* flies high from the Mast. As for Dale Pollock's **Skywalking: The Life and Films of George Lucas** (Elm Tree Books, £9.95), a slighter affair about a slighter talent, I opened it to scoff but stayed to admire. A good reporter's eyes and ears record in candid detail the story encapsulated in this remark from an increasingly reclusive Lucas:

> From being a struggling, starving film-maker to being incredibly successful in a period of a couple of years is quite a powerful experience, and not necessarily a good one.

Or, whither the whizz-kids next?

Actors' careers all too often become the subject of third-hand biographies, concocted from newspaper cuttings and the unreliable recollections of professional 'friends'. An honourable exception to this leaden rule would be Alan L. Gansberg's factual **Little Caesar** (New English Library, £9.95), in which the appalling humiliations endured by Edward G. Robinson during the HUAC witch-hunt are remorselessly annotated together with the off-camera domestic dramas that made dignity hard to preserve. Mr Gansberg benefited from access to Warner archives, just as Alexander Walker did from another studio for the year's liveliest Life: his handsomely designed and copiously illustrated **Joan Crawford: The Ultimate Star** (Weidenfeld, £12.50), billed as 'authorised by Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer'. Any reservations one has about the predictably alert and informative text – Walker has earned himself a well-found corner in screen-goddesses – resolve around the

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MGM core of it, with Louis B. coming out rosier than usual. Nor is there much ground given to the aggressive knocking of *Mommie Dearest*, book and film. Instead, we get a skilled, sequential tracing of a unique Triumph of the Will, with LeSueur swiftly transmuting to Crawford and the public-hungry Crawford adapting her image down the decades to keep 'em queuing: the mask – that slashed mouth, those fierce black eyebrows – haunts on.

Yet more briefly, but warmly, recommended are four works which point up the diversity of writing about cinema. In the marvellously dry **A Private View** (Weidenfeld, £9.95), Irene Mayer Selznick profits from that give-away double name to offer an insider's track-report on po-faced, thrift-conscious papa Louis and spend-go-lucky David, her husband for 15 years: great stuff. The subtitle of Richard Roud's searching and affectionate **A Passion for Films** (Secker, £9.95) – 'Henri Langlois and the Cinémathèque Française' – reveals its scope but not its animating intelligence. Phil Hardy's **The Western** (Aurum Press, £14.95) is volume one of an ambitiously projected encyclopedia to cover nine genres. And for mostly *New Yorker*-sharp bedtime reading **Four Films by Woody Allen** (Faber, £5.95) is unimprovable. □

PAPERBACKS
Alan Brien

Puffed up

THE LATE Peter Forster, like many novelists, compiled his own blurbs. Also, like many novelists, he was convinced that a hard core of fiction reviewers only skimmed the books sent to them, padding out their copy with details lifted from the dust jacket. To test his theory, he insinuated into one blurb a character who never appeared and an ending that never occurred. When the reviews came, he was able to tour literary parties brandishing his press cuttings, underlining those which had fallen into the trap, proof positive of the widespread venality and laziness of critics. He was rather cast down when I pointed out that all he had demonstrated was that he had written a novel which several professional readers could not finish, even when paid.

A blurb that does anything more than whet the appetite can put off more browsers than it turns on. Consider David G. Smith's **The Music Stops and the Waltz Continues** (Chatto £3.95), which, the back cover proclaims, is that book 'a million people have promised themselves they'd write', now written 'with the energy of Kerouac, the lyricism of Laurie Lee and the ruthless wit of Martin Amis' to produce 'a mischievous and romantic first novel that anybody under the age of forty will read with that joyful sense of recognition'.

I'd say this had already alienated a fair proportion of its potential buyers – over-forties warned off; the million whose opening chapters yellow in a bottom drawer made envious and sceptical; those long awaiting an amalgam of Kerouac, Lee and Amis (admittedly a rare breed) geared to demand, like Diaghileff, 'Astonish me!'

Actually, once past the blurb, the inept title, a garishly *faux-naif* cover, Smith's first novel is intermittently quite good, if you are in the mood for a rather dated, coltish romp through a fantasy of swinging London, flash-backs to a Hogarthian Scots childhood and a final escape to holiday-postcard Italy. The self-conscious style, studded with OK literary names, is more reminiscent of Henry Miller strained through Colin Wilson, while the first-person narration, in the mouth of what appears to be a not-very-altered ego of the author, relies heavily on farcical-physiological sex scenes.

Chatto now publishes much of its fiction in simultaneous paperback and hardback editions. *The Music Stops* is available in both, as is another Chatto novel which carries a blurb almost equally tuned to the pitch of a Hollywood trailer of the '40s. This, it insists, is 'a major literary event' and a book of 'awesome power'. Awe is not a critical reaction much to be trusted, but, fortunately, I read on and so did not miss Antonio Lobo Antunes' **South of Nowhere** (Chatto £3.50).

Here, in the perpetual twilight of a Lisbon bar, a burnt-out veteran of the Angolan wars, prematurely aged, calloused in mind and body, attempts to exorcise his waking nightmares through confession to an apathetic pickup. Through chapters simply labelled A to Z, the former Army surgeon relives the 1001 days of his season in hell, desperately disentangling terror from boredom, love from disgust, guilt from excitement, in a brilliant sequence of etchings which burn themselves into the memory like a red-hot scalpel on bare flesh. This journey into the interior, personal as well as topographical, towards the heart of darkness, makes Graham Greene, or even Conrad, seem like a timid tourist.

A third Chatto novel, Sergei Dovlatov's **The Compromise** (£3.95) is a comic classic about the splendours and miseries of life among the journalists on a provincial, bread-and-marge level, and the most thoroughly enjoyable tale I have read this month, perhaps this year. Though the author now lives in New York rather than Tallinn, this Russian equivalent of Waugh's *Scoop* manages to guide us through a world of bull-shitting reportage, office politics, expense fiddling, conspiracy and gossip over the typewriter, which is alien and exotic yet familiar and recognisable. The device of prefacing each episode with the dreary, official version as printed in *Soviet Estonia*, followed by the off-the-record account of how the boozy, lecherous newsman and his unsavoury mates cobbled it together despite the inevitable cock-ups, works marvellously. For a while, I thought it must be a hoax, master-minded by Keith Waterhouse – and no higher praise is possible. *The Compromise* deserves to be Fleet Street's

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favourite Christmas present to itself, a satire which, like all the best satires, reflects the reader's own face as well.

Dovlatov demonstrates that even under a dictatorship from the top those at the bottom can still bend the rules and survive. As the resident informer on his paper checks in at the secret police HQ across the street, the resident dissident is likely to open the window and call out: 'Working overtime again?' It is a human touch worth remembering when sampling **KGB: The Eyes of Russia** (Sidgwick & Jackson, £2.25) which tries to make our flesh creep as author Harry Rositzke, 25 years in the CIA, piles up his often startling and titillating evidence to prove that here is 'a bold service unhampered by bureaucratic timidity' with all the globe on its files.

For a more objective survey of life in that sixth of the world inhabited by what Mrs Thatcher dubs 'our sworn enemy', I recommend **Modern Soviet Society** (Methuen, £7.95, hardback £16) by the distinguished French scholar Basile Kerblay. Unlike many sociologists, Professor Kerblay not only interprets and extrapolates statistics in an eminently readable fashion, but also has a sharp and beady eye for personal detail.

His habit of contrasting income, expenditure, fashions and habits with France, rather than America or Britain, supplies an oblique, stereoscopic light on Anglo-Saxon attitudes. Most French divorces cite adultery; in Russia, this is mentioned in only 15 per cent of cases and is far out-ranked by alcoholism. As a consideration in marriage, cultural level is a far more important discriminating factor than race, religion, occupation or income. Alcohol is regarded as aesthetic, rather than anaesthetic – 'We drink to warm our souls and it is only then we come alive', he quotes Sinyavsky as explaining.

It is also worth recalling that the KGB is only one of many instruments of repression employed by the ruling class in many countries to manipulate, terrorise and control the peoples of its own and other countries. For an exhaustive, occasionally exhausting (80 pages of notes) analysis of not only the KGB and the CIA, but BOSS in South Africa, SAVAK in Iran, MOSSAD in Israel, DINA in Chile and the rest, Thomas Plate and Andrea Darvi's **Secret Police** (Abacus, £3.50) serves as an invaluable and unnerving guide book.

One protection is access to the history of our century – the one period most neglected in schools and colleges. Here, that underground masterpiece, George Dangerfield's **The Strange Death of Liberal England** (Paladin, £2.95), written in 1935, is a key work. First re-published in 1966, it has been in and out of print, its message oddly resistant to absorption by the popular mind.

We still carry on thinking of 1914 as the end of a golden age, the dusk of the long Asquithian afternoon. Dangerfield, in prose that makes you reluctant to put the book down for a moment, reveals a society tearing apart at the seams, riven by the threat of civil uprising and a generals' mutiny, by social revolution and a women's movement leaning to violence, as the nation turned almost with relief to a World War. □

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The NHS: A Picture of Health?

STEVE ILIFFE *Lawrence & Wishart* £3.95

It sometimes seems as if there's an inverse ratio between the NHS and books on it: the more the NHS gets cut, the more books are produced about it. Steve Iliffe, a North London GP, has written a timely and very up-to-date history and critique of the service. Unlike authors of other such endeavours, he doesn't leapfrog from its origins to the tense present, but usefully guides us through the Fifties ('the lean decade'), Sixties and Seventies, observing its chronic underfunding and creeping managerialism, with a full-frontal attack on its pay differentials and swipes at the role of market forces and the power of professionalism.

He offers some valuable insights, such as his critique of consumerism in the NHS and his claim that effective health education could *increase* the demand for NHS services rather than simply legitimate the cuts. He also scrutinises, and finds wanting, the Left's thinking on the NHS – and here I feel a 'but' coming on, and a big one. It is caused, I think, by Iliffe's own conceptual framework. As a socialist doctor, he is both critical of the medical model and wedded to it.

In his preface, he declares that he intends the book to be 'an antidote to the conventional radicalism that dismisses health care and medicine as commercial conspiracies or oppressive power relations, designed simply to keep people in their place' – but by way of compensation, he ignores ideology altogether.

He is at his weakest on conflicts of interest, proposing a national 'health alliance' to resist the cuts, and assuming a congruence of interest between professionals and patients. But how readily would Tory consultants in London join with black ancillary workers and patients in far-off impoverished regions to fight Thatcher's cuts?

While his rejection of reductionism is welcome, he offers instead a utopianism/reformism of his own, with a DHSS working out national priorities in public and accountable to the public in a fine display of participatory democracy. How this is to be achieved without wholesale social and political changes remains a mystery, and at times like this Iliffe sounds unintentionally Fabian.

Anne Karpf

Enthusiasms

BERNARD LEVIN *Cape* £8.95

Bernard Levin, columnist, is given to enthusing over things as though he invented them. Bernard Levin, author, here evinces a similar tendency, claiming that a pleasure-hating society has stifled many people's – though not, of course, his – capacity for enthusiasm about the good things in life. This book provides an opportunity for those poor souls to sample, by proxy, the real McCoy.

Books, paintings, cities, walking, landscape, Shakespeare, music, opera, *haute cuisine*: no reader of Levin's journalism will be surprised to find these abiding passions of his described, certainly no reader who heard his nine short talks on 'Pleasures' for Radio 3 last year. Levin acknowledges that this book incorporates 'a few passages from these talks'. Written tongue-in-cheek, surely: the talks (later transcribed in *The Listener*) are the skeleton on which *Enthusiasms* has been built. Levin inflated that existing material – almost every word of which reappears – and added fragments of autobiography. Those fragments, by revealing the genesis of his enthusiasms, reveal more about him than the enthusiasms themselves. Levin acquired many of his passions at that very susceptible time, the late teens, like a convert finding The Way. No wonder, then, as converts make the best fanatics, that he so often casts himself as the lone, beleaguered voice evangelising in the cause of right.

In this book, Levin is most absorbing when most personal: in the autobiographical fragments and the rather Emersonian chapter on the spiritual delight induced by the world's man-made wonders. He is next-best on Shakespeare, worst on food (his account of which degenerates into a riverine catalogue of dishes and restaurants, like Whitman gone epicurean). With his proneness to verbosity, though, it is everywhere apparent that the expansion from 'Pleasures' to *Enthusiasms* has introduced more fat than flesh.

David Montrose

Pioneers of Soviet Photography

GRIGORY SHUDAKOV *Thames & Hudson* £20

This is a spectacular book of photographs to be pored over. We are presented with a series of celebrations – of the peasant turned revolutionary, the peasant becoming literate, of the artist as politically committed hero, of the worker building industry with bare hands; it is a partisan record of two decades following the October revolution. Practically every picture prompts admiration for its art and artfulness. Every picture is a symbol and the book as a whole is a tale of morality, a statement of virtue through heroic struggle.

François Mathey in his short introduction uses the term 'sculpture' to describe Aleksandr Rodchenko's photograph of his mother. In fact, photograph after photograph by Rodchenko and by those who imitated him managed to turn photography into a series of monuments.

But in the face of these seductively romantic pictures, questions form. Did anyone manage to record and erect a monument for the millions that died at the hands of their own government during these two decades? And how easily Grigory Shudakov (compiler of the book, associate editor of the USSR's magazine *Sovetskoye Foto)* says of the famous photographer Boris Ignatovitch that for him, 'the politically committed nature of press photography was normal, self-evident, and presented absolutely no obstacles to his creative aspirations'. No doubt it is easy for Grigory also to combine political commitment with photography – how strange his book shows no photograph of Stalin. But Lenin is well to the fore – a clerical, stern Lenin, the humanitarian who founded the Cheka. How well we note that the lenses of the period were blinded by the political commitment of the operatives.

Peter Dormer

James and Jim: A Biography of James Kennaway

TREVOR ROYLE *Mainstream* £9.95

Ever since the parliamentary union of 1707 transformed the Scottish nation into a British region, Scottish writers have acknowledged a disturbing internal division – between a defeatist acceptance of loss and a defiant assertion of independence.

As Trevor Royle explains in his absorbing biography of James Kennaway (1928-68), the author of *Tunes of Glory* was as conscious as Henry Jekyll

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of being 'not truly one, but truly two'. Kennaway, says Royle, 'had been aware of the division since his schooldays . . . James was the mature man, Jim the boy who had never grown up . . . James was the sophisticate, Jim the "nasty wee Scot". Later, he came to characterise the split as James the domesticated man constrained by society and Jim the artist.'

It was to Kennaway's credit that he exploited his own quality in a series of novels exploring, with stylistic subtlety and a flair for characterisation, the theme of rivalry. It is there in *Tunes*, as Jock combats Barrow for the soul of the battalion; in *Household Ghosts*, as Pink takes on all comers for the love of Mary; in *Some Gorgeous Accident*, as Link and Fiddes compete for the attention of Susan.

Link and Fiddes were, in fact, Kennaway himself and John Le Carré (David Cornwell), who had an affair with Susan Kennaway. Drawing on Susan Kennaway's *The Kennaway Papers* (1981), Royle reconstructs a real-life scenario that strongly reinforces the theme of his biography. Under the pressure of losing his wife (albeit temporarily) to a greatly gifted rival, James was reduced to Jim. There was a melodramatic evening in a villa south of Salzburg with Kennaway collapsed weeping on his bed. Le Carré approached him, addressed him as 'Old Jim, old chumbo, old chum' and Kennaway became the assured James once more. Almost immediately, though, he lapsed into a destructive cycle of (to cite Royle) 'introspection, booze and sex' – the last refuges of the defeatist Scot.

With great sympathy and sensitivity, Royle traces Kennaway's emotionally troubled career from its beginnings in Kenwood Park, Perthshire, to its tragic end when the novelist, driving home from London after a meeting with Peter O'Toole (who played Pink in the film *Country Dance*), had a massive coronary: 'His car spun out of control . . . James Kennaway was dead, as he had frequently prophesied, at the early age of forty.' Royle describes the impact on Kennaway of the death of his father in 1941; his period at the public school of Glenalmond, where 'the myth of James and Jim was born'; his National Service and subsequent activities as a student at Oxford and a publisher at Longman's. True to Kennaway's 'sense of being Scottish', this enthusiastic and elegantly executed biography is a searching account of the life and art of a character as complicated as any of his fictional creations.

Alan Bold

Drawn from the Life: A Memoir
ROBERT MEDLEY *Faber* £12.50

Drawn from the Life is an unlikely sort of book, as its author is an unlikely memoirist. Robert Medley comes over as a modest, charming man, and one wholly without egotism. He begins with professions of unease about writing, but soon slips into an easy, camp elegance. He writes for the most part disparagingly of his own work as a painter and stage-designer. He shows loyalty but makes no great claims for the mostly unenduring importance of the people and projects he was involved with. There is the memoir's usual flock of anecdotes, and an unusually thorough index, but at the same time the feeling that most of it is of little moment. As a result, the book has no centre, and no particular magnificence. It is, though, a representative life in the arts in London, over the last 60 years.

For me, its interest lay not so much in the description of the fringes of painting Bloomsbury and of the Group Theatre of Auden, Eliot and MacNiece; nor in the holds-barred autobiographical passages; nor in the retailed anecdotes, many of them second- or third-hand, but none the worse for that: but in what is between the lines – the moral and aesthetic assumptions of Medley and his generation. First and foremost of those is personality: 'We were concerned with the quest for *personal* identity and *personal* loyalty.' In Medley's writing about his parents, there is the casual egality of a generation that never rebelled.

Although, as homosexuals and creative people, Medley and his friends opposed their parents' values, they still held on to the Victorians' sense of propriety and pride in what they did. There is a Victorian confidence about the sentence, 'In becoming a person I was becoming an artist.' The enemy of personality is inhibition: 'successful and uninhibited,' writes Medley, as though they came to the same thing. To some degree, these ideas are still current, and one difference between the Thirties and the Eighties is that the people who hold them nowadays are rather more sheepish about them.

Michael Hofmann

Writers in Russia 1917-1978
MAX HAYWARD *Harvill Press* £7.95

This collection is a fitting tribute to an outstanding scholar, translator and critic, who, until his death in 1979, was generally regarded as one of this country's leading authorities on 20th-century Russian literature. Max Hayward left behind no major work, yet his translations of modern Russian writing and his numerous articles and prefaces arguably did more to illuminate the 'literary process' under Soviet rule than the work of any other Russian specialist of his generation.

It was Max Hayward, the son of a Yorkshire mechanic, who was responsible with Manya Harai for making Pasternak's *Dr Zhivago* available in the English language. He translated Nadezhda Mandelstam's remarkable memoirs of her husband, *Hope Against Hope* and *Hope Abandoned*, and, with Paul Stevenson, that other classic about the Stalin era, Yevgenia Ginzburg's *Into the Whirlwind*. A list of the authors whom he translated reads like a Who's Who of modern Russian literature and dissent.

Apart from being an outstanding translator, he had the gift of being able to 'express in a few pages more than some writers can say in a volume'. His widely scattered writings on modern Russian literature can hardly be rivalled for their erudition and insight, clarity and succinctness.

But Max was a modest, unassuming man, more inclined to inspire others than to claim recognition for himself. Patricia Blake, in her introduction, provides a fascinating picture of an unorthodox, highly sensitive academic who, despite his various personal problems, exuded an unforgettable warmth and generosity. He was never quite at home in the ivory towers of Oxford and refused to turn his back on his working-class roots. His sympathy for the poor and underprivileged, as the Polish philosopher Leczek Kolakowski points out, underlay his commitment to the peoples of the Soviet bloc. 'It was the strain of compassion for an abused people and their disinherited literature that gave his work its importance and his life its singular poignancy.'

Patricia Blake, herself an American expert on modern Russian literature and a colleague of Hayward's, has produced a labour of love. She has gathered together in one volume the best of Hayward's penetrating essays, thereby revealing the brilliance of his achievement. The result is an outstanding volume indispensable for any serious student of contemporary Russian literature and a fine, lucid introduction for the interested non-specialist.

Bohdan Nahaylo

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FICTION
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Death-traps

Cold Heaven
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A Minor Apocalypse
TADEUSZ KONWICKI *Faber* £8.95
Mates
TOM WAKEFIELD *Gay Men's Press* £7.95 & £3.50

Brian Moore's **Cold Heaven** proves that a novel can be magnificent even while its central idea remains incredible. Marie Davenport is steeling herself to tell her husband Alex that she is about to leave him for her lover, when Alex is killed in an accident. Then Alex's body disappears, only to turn up, eventually, as a sort-of-alive Alex in a motel in Carmel on the California coast (a place whose supernatural potentialities will be familiar to readers of Moore's *The Great Victorian Collection*). A year before, in Carmel, Marie saw an apparition of the Virgin, which instructed her to 'tell the priests' to build a shrine on a rock-shelf by the sea. Marie, convent-educated but hostile to the church and not at all anxious to stop committing adultery, had not obeyed – but now she feels herself gradually being taken over, following orders, drawn into the field of force of nuns and priests. As she submits, so Alex recovers; as she resists, so he deteriorates. 'They', it seems, will bring him back from the dead if she will yield to their power.

Only Marie knows all parts of the story. She daren't tell Alex about her lover, Daniel; she and Alex daren't tell Daniel or the priests about Alex's resurrection – since that will destroy Alex's career as a doctor as well as her hope of marrying Daniel. She is filled with dread, not only that she may have to renounce Daniel in order to save Alex's life, but (it is hinted) that she may have to renounce the world altogether and live like a nun.

The book works up to a powerful climax, which seems to let her off the hook. But there is no assurance that cold, capricious heaven won't issue her more orders in the future.

The book is magnificent in a technical sense: the writing (as always with Moore) is beautifully clear; the handling of suspense is masterly; motifs of blue sky and mist, lightning and thunder, serve succinctly both as thriller-like cues and and as central poetic symbols. There is lightish relief – such as the worldly Monsignor ('God's golfer') who signs off with his 'Have a nice day' – but this is still vital to the plot. And the pattern of ideas is tight-knit and ambitious without being overbearing: religion and common sense; miracle and medical science; God's commands and free will; marriage and adultery.

The novel remains incredible, to this reader, because Moore – or at least his text – does seem to endorse the supernatural version of the events within it; no room for a non-supernatural version is really left. But even those who are resistant to, or just plain sceptical about apparitions and miracles will find it utterly engrossing reading.

TADEUSZ KONWICKI is a novelist and film director, still living in Poland though no longer officially published there; **A Minor Apocalypse** was finished in 1979, just before the rise of Solidarity. Reading the novel (translated into English by Richard Lourie) is a cheerless experience, in two senses. On the one hand, the world it describes is one of bleakness and breakdown. Warsaw is literally falling to bits. Chunks of masonry are dropping off the Palace of Culture; bridges are collapsing into the Vistula; gas and water are being cut off.

At the start of the book, the unnamed narrator, a writer, is visited by two dissident colleagues who urge him to burn himself to death in public protest; at the end, he seems to be about to do this. In between, he wanders round the city, running into most of the people he has ever known, holding conversations, reviewing his life. Everywhere are television screens showing interminable phoney Party ceremonies, with dancers in national costume and little girls being kissed by obese officials; no one bothers to turn up the sound.

On the other hand, unfortunately, for much of the time it's simply hard to work out what's going on – or, rather, why it's going on. The narrator, for example, has a sudden erotic encounter with a Russian woman, Nadezhda (Hope). Does she stand for the betrayed ideal of revolution? In the same apartment lies a paralysed old man. Why?

And here, as elsewhere, the furious, passionate conversations don't seem directed to any goal. Part of the difficulty may be that the novel is written both in the parabolic mode and *à clef*. But many of the phantasmagorical events seem irredeemably private or arbitrary. The result is a book that is more a symptom of pre-Solidarity intellectual introspection and deadlock than its controlled, artistic portrait.

TOM WAKEFIELD appears to have set himself the task, in **Mates**, of writing as straight a gay novel as possible: no purple; no camp; a deliberately quiet and matter-of-fact story of the joint life of two men. Len, a miner's son, and Cyril, a teacher-to-be, meet in the army in 1954. A series of disjunct short-story-like chapters relates various crises, meetings and travels that happen during the next 27 years. At the end, Cyril is dead and Len is left alone, turfed out of their house by mean-minded and tight-fisted relatives. The book is perhaps altogether too emotionless in tone, given its subject-matter. Would the men's first moves towards one another, for example, have been so unconfused as they are made to seem? But it tells many truths, and truth is always worth having. □

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ART
John Spurling

Emblematic

Raoul Dufy 1877-1953
Hayward

For the Arts Council to put on a grand retrospective of Dufy as its major winter exhibition is rather like the National Theatre doing a revival of *Guys and Dolls*. 'His enormous dexterity', says the *Oxford Companion to Art*, 'was devoted to a luxury drawing-room art of splendid attractiveness.' Neither the Macmillan *World History of Art* nor Norbert Lynton's *The Story of Modern Art* mentions him at all. People who write compendia are not, of course, infallible, but clearly some explanation is called for. Is the Arts Council stooping to frivolity or has Dufy been wrongfully dismissed from serious consideration?

It's not that he's been neglected. On the contrary, his prices are enormous and his paintings much prized by those who can afford them (the one President Mitterrand gave as a wedding present to the Prince and Princess of Wales is in the exhibition). But although Dufy began as a Post-Impressionist, became a Fauve, accompanied Braque to l'Estaque in the steps of Cézanne, illustrated Apollinaire and Mallarmé, tried out Cubism (even dared to make it colourful), designed costumes and decor for Cocteau's *Le Boeuf sur le Toit*, belonged in short to the inner circle of the French *avant-garde*, he has not, up to now, been quite respectable. 'Dexterity', 'luxury', 'attractiveness': the words are tipped with poison and Dufy sinks down with Boucher, Fragonard and Ingres into a niche reserved for the shallow, the fashionable, the too easily liked.

It is hard, going round the exhibition for the first time, not to feel that he belongs there. His subjects are just what you expect: racecourses and regattas, yachts and piers, pert nudes and sunny studio interiors with windows overlooking Paris or the Riviera, classical orchestras, summer landscapes, festive flags; Cowes, Henley, Nice, Deauville, Ascot; only Glyndebourne seems to be missing. His shadowless colours are rich and relaxing – predominantly blue and green; his lines strong and breezy, gracefully rococo, but with a taut sportsman's flick to them. The general impression is charming, optimistic, decorative. If you had a drawing-room you could hardly do better than furnish it with Dufys.

But it is just at the point where you would least expect it that this general impression is modified. What first separated Dufy from his fellow *avant-gardistes* was a visit to Munich in 1909. There he saw the decorative style called *'l'art munichois'* and a year later began to work for Paul Poiret, the couturier who had recently abolished the corset and dressed the 'new women' in Fauvist colours; by 1912 Dufy was also working for the Lyons silk manufacturer, Bianchini-Férier. The visitor to the Hayward enters this phase of Dufy's career – the decade 1912-22 – in the upper mezzanine gallery and finds himself/herself suddenly in a place where colours, lines and motifs no longer pretend to be a window on to the world but are organised into purely artificial patterns for fabrics. Dufy, however, was no ordinary pattern-maker. As Bryan Robertson, the organiser of the exhibition, remarks in his long and eloquent catalogue introduction, Dufy was an inventor and it is his patterns for fabrics that, just as they first drew his inventiveness out of him, supply the measure of its quality. The truth that slowly emerges from this inner sanctum, where the walls are covered in black and small panels of colour and shape glow, pulsate, shift and flow around you as you move, is rather awkward. Dufy the decorator, the commercial designer, made abstract art. Not only that: he made abstract

Portrait of Nico Mazaraki, 1932

art which, at the end of the First War, anticipated much that was being done by abstract artists 20 to 30 years after the Second.

The awkwardness of this fact is not that it justifies the jibes of the anti-abstract brigade – 'mere decoration' – but that it calls in question the whole basis of Romantic Art, the distinction between art that is 'profound' and art that is 'decorative'. There would be no problem, of course, if Dufy had simply made fabrics which adapted the inventions of Gauguin or Poussin – that would be a process of popularisation everyone could accept – it is his use, before they had been legitimately invented as art, of motifs and colour effects by Calder and Vasarely, Jasper John and Bridget Riley, that may shake a few prejudices.

But why, really, should anyone object to Dufy as a forbear, when Seurat, Monet, Picasso, Matisse would be perfectly decent ancestors to admit to? The answer is circular: because Dufy is a blatantly decorative artist. Yet, as Robertson points out, Rubens and Delacroix were decorators, so were Picasso and Matisse, so were the creators of the frescoes at Knossos and Pompeii and many of the great Renaissance artists. What is so demeaning about being decorative? The answer is again circular: it is associated, since the Romantic period, with bourgeois consumerism. Dufy, in other words, is an artistic outcast because he is an ideological outcast and, I'm sorry to say, vice versa; for in addition to pre-inventing various forms of abstraction in his textile designs, Dufy pre-invented in his paintings a manner of commercial design which has since become commonplace.

What he did was to take pattern-making back from his textile designs to his paintings, with the result that, although the motifs and the subject-matter were drawn from life and even from specific occasions, their presentations became almost wholly imaginative. You can see it happening in a series of paintings of the beach and sea done around the mid-Twenties. What has been anchored to the earth, to a particular place and time and viewpoint, suddenly floats free. The picture space becomes a mental construct, with bathing nudes (Picassan neo-classical creatures), boats, wavelets, shells arranged more like the motifs on a scarf or a dress than the elements in a view. And although most of the later paintings are, apparently, views, that sense of free-floating design persists, carried in the independence of line from colour and of both from the real objects and places they allude to.

Le grand champ de blé, for example, of 1933, is a broad, open landscape. Yet the more you look the more you grow aware that it is not a place so much as an assemblage of summer's day emblems: ears of wheat, poppies, butterflies, teams of horses with their drivers, distant trees, cherubic clouds above a high horizon, all scattered with rapidly-drawn strokes over a thinly-brushed ground of colour. The ground is what makes you think of Dufy's textiles, for it is in three vertical bands, mauve and yellow framing a broad central band of green, so that the light, the mood and the colour relationships dance and change partners just as they do over the shiny surface of one of his patterns in silk.

From paintings such as this – a kind of abstracted impressionism comparable to Noel Coward's abstracted version of the old sentimental comedy – sprang a world of posters, book illustrations, tea-towels, tourist trophies, prints and travel brochures of which the famous series of Shell Guides is perhaps the best and purest example. But now that the snake has swallowed its own tail, now that, first through Pop Art and then the neo-Fauvist emblematic painting of the last few years, commercial and second-hand images have been re-adopted into the repertory of art, we can surely begin to enjoy Dufy without misgivings. He is something of a miracle, actually – an artist of such dextrous originality so lightly worn that generations of art historians and even artists have looked right through him and only noticed that one of the original Fauvists and Cézannists dropped out to become a decorator. □

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FILMS
John Coleman

Snuffbox

Videodrome (18)
ABC, Shaftesbury Avenue; Cinecenta
Girl from Trieste (18)
Classics, Haymarket, Charing Cross Road, Chelsea; ABCs, Bayswater and Edgware Road
Triumphs of a Man Called Horse (15)
Classic, Tottenham Court Road

In an observation nudgingly contrived to spill out over the larger context, 'it has a philosophy and that's what makes it dangerous,' warns a raddled woman early on in the Canadian writer-director David Cronenberg's latest sickie. Pay her no mind. **Videodrome** sketches a couple of obscenely muddled gestures towards the perils of mental totalitarianism implicit in many-cabled TV and the age of the uncensorable cassette, but they are no more than mock-serious window-dressing for the usual Cronenberg shopful of flesh-gobbets, slimy mutations and twisted sex. Max (James Woods), the fellow so cautioned, is one of the directors of a cable station avid for more sensational material. Through an electronics genius paid to monitor rival stations, he stumbles on flickering fragments of the show of the film's title, snuff-stuff where a manacled girl is apparently being whipped to death.

'It's just torture and murder,' says an aglow Max. 'I think it's what's next.' So does his new girlfriend Nicki (damnably misused Debbie Harry), who is into S-&-M – see her apply a lighted cigarette to her own breast – and takes off to audition for 'Videodrome'.

Meanwhile mucky Max, himself in search of the elusive programme, encounters one Bianca O'Blivion, daughter of a media pundit, as she runs a Cathode Ray Mission for the equivalent of TV winos. And soon, as he further exposes himself to snatches of the horrorshow, he is hallucinating erotic evils; develops a disgusting vertical slit in his belly, reminiscent of a giant vagina, into which he thrusts a revolver and those using him as an experiment thrust a living-flesh cassette; watches as TV sets throb and pulse like organisms and maybe-dead Nicki's vast mouth cajoles him from the screen. By now it is impossible to distinguish the goodies from the baddies or, indeed, to grab even the tackiest thread of sense from Cronenberg's real business: of penis-pistols tumescing to kill through the small box's bulging window, hands-and-guns welded together into dripping tissue, all the emetic paraphernalia familiar to devotees of this cult-darling. The medium, quite simply, is the mess.

Last coupled disastrously in Marco Ferreri's *Tales of Ordinary Madness*, Ben Gazzara and the luscious Ornella Muti re-unite crassly in **Girl from Trieste,** directed hither and yon by Pasquale Festa Campanile from his own novel. I wish to God that Mr Gazzara would get back to acting again, preferably with someone like his old pal John Cassavetes. There is an audience out there and I am fed up with squirmingly being part of it.

Here he is Dino, an 'international newspaper cartoonist' (he sits around with a big pad drawing outlines of Muti) living in style in a seaside village near Trieste. Into his life and rapidly bed comes Muti/Nicole, a mysterious beauty saved from drowning on the beach one chilly day. Capriciously, this Nicole disappears, then pops back again, to find Dino about to conjoin with an ex-mistress Val (poor Mimsy Farmer). Aghast, Nicole zooms off in her red car with Dino in vain pursuit.

Since it is evident from the first reel, I give nothing away by explaining that Nicole ('Why did you have to close the door? I like a man who loves me even when I pee') is some sort of actual nutter, given to nipping in and out of a psychiatric clinic run with unimaginably lax efficiency by prissy Jean-Claude Brialy as Dr Marin. Over 103 long minutes Dino is finally fool enough to summon up courage to take Nicole permanently into his life; and Marin unprofessional enough to applaud. She proves a sloppy housekeeper, sees beetles in the bath, wanders around knickerless and shaves her head. As Dino has remarked to loyal Val, 'I thought I'd been around but this girl's making moves on me I never saw before'. Things turn out rather badly.

In 1970 Elliott Silverstein directed Richard Harris in *A Man Called Horse*, the one in which an English milord back in 1825 underwent that beastly Sun Vow ritual of suspension by knives through the pectorals in order to prove his dedication to a Sioux tribe. The piece had a lot of real Indians speaking a lot of real Indian and showed some anthropological concern for detail. Then Irving Kershner took over in 1976 for *The Return of a Man Called Horse*, with less interest in authenticity and more of that chest-skewered hanging-about.

Now, in someone's profound unwisdom, we have John Hough's **Triumphs of a Man Called Horse** and to listen to Richard Harris croaking away at the outset (he's aged Peace Chief of the Yellow Hand Sioux in 1875, gold-fever time) that could well be spelt 'Hoarse'. Mercifully, after a flashback or two to the old Sun Vow ordeal and to a commercial-break slow-motion lovers' meeting in water, Chief Harris gets his at the rifle of a rascally white bent on stirring up war and his noble-profiled son Koda (Michael Beck), back from law studies in the East, takes over the feudin' and fightin', lissomely abetted by a super Crow girl Redwing (Ana De Sade). The result is what is conventionally known as action-packed, with a joke during a torture-by-branding sequence: 'You goin' to have so many marks on you, we're goin' to call you Spotted Pony'. Or mini-haha. □

THEATRE
Christopher Edwards

Love's labour

Successful Stratagems
MARIVAUX *Lyric Studio*
Outlaws
MICHAEL ABBENSETTS *The Arts Theatre*

Despite the fact that Marivaux was elected to the Academie Française in preference to Voltaire, he is virtually unknown to audiences on this side of the Channel, and it is hard to find a translation of any of his 32 plays, novels or moral essays. Now, thanks to a typically pioneering production by Mike Alfreds' company, Shared Experience, we can appreciate the acuteness of a major French comic dramatist of the 18th century.

Marivaux's theme is love – and the manoeuvres, intrigues, impersonations and tactical switches lovers are put to in order to secure the object of desire. The Comtesse loves the doting Dorante but abandons him for the conceited Chevalier who in turn has abandoned the Marquise. The latter coolly persuades Dorante to join her in a mock romance which takes them to the brink of marriage before the Comtesse's resistance cracks. A similar comedy is enacted among the servants where Arlequin and Blaise, to their chagrin, are forced apart in order to reinforce the stratagems of their superiors.

The pivot of the piece is Holly Wilson's superb Comtesse – a delicate combination of caprice, amour propre and emotional acquisitiveness. The Marquise's insight that the Comtesse will drop the Chevalier as soon as she sees 'her' Dorante with another bears out the truth of what someone once dubbed 'Proust's first law' – jealousy doesn't spring from love, it is love that springs from jealousy. This apart, the play (and Marivaux's work in general) is distinguished by its abjuration of explicit moralising in favour of realised psychological truth.

Nick Dunning's Dorante is a model of delicate, wounded sentiment, while Sam Dale's pastel-lozenged Arlequin flits in and out in light-footed sorrow, all sighs on tiptoe and mournful Watteauesque grace. As a contrast to their grieving masculine innocence there is James Smith's supercilious and worldly valet who adds the parting cynical comment of the evening – that despite the success of the stratagem he gives them all six months at the most.

The only quibble I have is that Timberlake Wertenbaker's translation fails to differentiate between the classes in any way; valet and Marquise all speak the same modern idiom, thus doing for the social system what neither Beaumarchais nor the French Revolution ever achieved.

Michael Abbensetts' **Outlaw** is a sprawling commentary on the last twenty-odd years of West Indian experience in this

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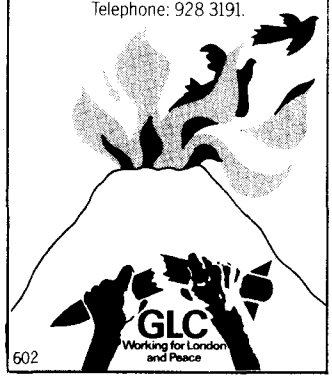

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country, seen through the personal history of Omar (Raul Newney), a half-caste Trinidadian haunted by a Catholic Belmont upbringing and a mother urging him to follow her example and marry a white. Omar starts as a petty crook – organising a gang of bag snatchers on Waterloo station which is where he meets starry-eyed Sheila (Jo Richardson) just off the boat in search of a white sugar daddy. Omar progresses through the underworld to become side-kick to a Rachmanite landlord called Peter Silk – a Polish Jew on the make who falls for Sheila. At a Brighton Black Power conference Omar stumbles on to a rhetoric of violence which immediately turns him into a star, and lands him in prison. On the way he has been adopted as a ghetto stud by a liberal white journalist (Jacqueline Pearce) who, to everyone's surprise, decides she loves him. Omar however has moved on – and still has some way to go; he eventually acquires semi-respectability as founder of a West Indian cultural centre.

The play is very long, very episodic and entirely fails to invest its contents with a sense of artistic unity. The dialogue is often fatally stilted and weighted down with chunks of historical and political detail necessary to shift Omar to the next stage in his progression. Abbensetts' conclusion is one of qualified optimism. Omar explains to a young black that the centre must be opened to whites as well, but this announcement comes across as simply an imposed desideratum rather than any realised climax earned by the previous two hours of drama. The evening is enlivened occasionally by Wolfe Morris' Peter Silk, an authentic portrait of the immigrant as both victim and victimiser, and by Tony Gillespie's relaxed impersonations of several minor roles. □

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TELEVISION
Hugo Williams

Ground level

THE NEW La Frenais-Clement series **Auf Wiedersehen, Pet** (ITV) looks like a big improvement on last year's turkey, *Lucky Jim*. In the first week, three brickies left Newcastle for jobs in Germany. Their car broke down en route and they missed their place in the promised hostel-with-table-tennis. 'First served first come,' snapped the German foreman-commandant, indicating a familiar-looking barracks. Who's playing John Mills, I wanted to know. But this was Other Ranks Only, of course.

Character was hammered home early: newly-married Neville tearing down the pin-ups in his locker, surly Dennis brooding on his divorce, obnoxious Oz throwing his rough-hewn racism around like a demolition ball: 'It's funny really, us lot helping to erect all this when it was our lot flattened it in the first place.' They meet up with the Welsh 'Bomber', quietly honing his Yosser impressions (Ian La Frenais claims to have been unaware of the *Blackstuff* while writing this related material, but now describes it as 'wonderful'), and head for the nearest brothel. 'I'll have a fag and wait for you,' says young Neville. 'I hope you've got a full packet,' says Bomber, as he disappears. Neville gets sidetracked into a poker game and staggers home next day, loaded, but with a tattoo on his arm. 'Who's Lotte?' they ask, but the woebegone Neville can't remember and now he can't go home to wifey. (I suppose they'll think of filling in the design towards the end of the series.)

So much for the story-board. But the plots of this excellent new series are always suitably muddied, leaving plenty of space for scene-setting and atmosphere, which lies about the place in heaps. Last week's instalment contained a jewel of a plot – racism, unexploded bombs, sackings, fraternisation and reconciliation – more or less concealed till afterwards in a positive haystack of on-site observation. 'This is a British bomb in't it?' asked big Oz. 'Yes,' said the foreman. 'It did not go off.' The series has everything really, except women, which may have freed the scripts from the usual clichés of sexual response and manners.

Those Glory Glory Days (C4) would have been good at half the length. Even better. It is one of those cute new British films, like *Gregory's Girl* and *Educating Rita*, that harks back to Ealing, when plots landed sticky-side-up and acting was a kind of private joke with the audience, involving plenty of mugging and lovable facial asides. Its originality lies in the idea of transferring the tedious schoolboy obsession with football on to four colourful schoolgirls, then having them overdo everything. Bobby Smith's chewing gum (to be chewed), ground walked on by Danny Blanchflower (to be sniffed), shin-pad belonging to someone else (to be worn): these are the holy relics of a gang of four Spurs supporters who follow the club through its apparently glorious 1961 season to its triumph at Wembley, or very nearly. 'Did you say who is Danny Blanchflower, Miss Cotton? He's God kicking a football.' (My blue pencil would have run straight through the part of this hammy schoolmistress.)

The film is a series of set pieces, the best of which happens when the self-named 'Danny' spends the night inside the player's changing room in order to be first in the queue for Cup Final tickets. She digs out her hero's No. 4 jersey and buries her face in it, then rolls about on the bottom of the empty communal bath. It is the kind of fantasy scene you usually only get in bubbles, as it were. Didn't *The Knack* have something of the kind? Here the fantasy generates its own fantasy: the suddenly maternal Danny is seen having a post-match bath with her beloved team: 'I think we played really well today. Don't argue with me. I *am* the boss. Want the soap, Bobby? Here you are then.'

It is the kind of comedy that produces something more than laughter. That side of things is taken care of by the highly satirical parents, who seem to be playing at life by comparison. The marvellous Julia McKenzie, smiling with martyred rage over who planted the clematis as Dad prepares to leave her and Danny contemplates suicide, brought on the laughter we usually reserve for the kiddiwinks in such tales of suburban mayhem.

Last week's **20/20 Vision** (C4) brought us a predictable rehash of the education debate, with irreconcilables facing each other across a no-man's-land. But the week before gave us a smart woman who had decided to make an example of herself and her wretched household. Her husband was a dear chap who thought it only natural that she should give up her job to look after his incontinent mother. But no sooner had God shown this unhappy lady to the Great Lavatory in the Sky than her own mother started to go haywire. 'This is not my mother,' she said sadly. 'My mother died six years ago. She was a marvellous person, not this rather unpleasant old woman who hurls abuse at me.' Her mental state showed through as she burst into tears over a letter from the council reclaiming her mother's special home. It was obvious that her husband was no use and she seemed to be using the film as a last attempt to impose her point of view on him. When he suggested that one of her brothers should share the work with her, she asked: Why not Jim, then? Well, Jim was getting divorced, wasn't he? Ah, so Jim doesn't have to take responsibility for his mother if he doesn't have a woman to do the work for him, is that it? It was. 'Making the programme has made me see how little hope there is for us now. We're just statistics. Mum and I.' We watched her mother wolfing sandwiches. To have to live face to face with a loved one who has gone off like milk, that must be purgatory indeed. □

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WEEKEND COMPETITION

No 2798 Set by Margaret Rogers

As if her *contretemps* with Reagan were not enough, Mrs Thatcher now has to bear Paul Johnson's public rebuke ('a very ordinary woman, occupying a position where ordinary virtues are not enough'). Keeping in mind her special relationship with both men in the past, write a Christmas card verse for her to send to one of them, or *vice versa*. Up to 12 lines, by 9 December.

No 2795 Set by G. L. Jessop

Abbreviated verse (after the fashion of Harry Graham's 'Poetical Economy').

Report By Al Dente

What curmudgeonly brutes you are! 'This is a bloody silly comp./More suited to a child in romp.,' John Sweetman wrote. I took it on the chin. In fact, just to show how decent I am, I even allowed one of the moaning minnies ('Smasher' Ransome-Davies, no less) into the winners' enclosure, despite his monstrous libel on the learned Jessop. But my generosity has its limits: eight fish apiece should be quite sufficient.

I offer for this foolish comp.
Without, I hope, appearing pomp.,
Some stern advice to G. L. Jess.
Whose scheme fills me with such depress.
When you are soused with Johnnie Walk.
And all your friends and you are talk.
About the back half of the Stag.
And what the readers of this mag.
Would value for their entertain.
Think twice, for what may seem quite brain.
At ten o'clock in Fleet Street booze.
Will be a great deal less amus.
To Hamill, Parrott, me and Green.
Who might wish, if you catch my mean.,
To give you a reproachful lect.
And stick your brainwave up your rect.

'SMASHER' RANSOME-DAVIES

I scanned the col. of situations vac.
For some quite undemand. and luc. posit.
That my sens. consc. would quietly let me take
Without impos. too many on. condit.
And found an open. in the Dep. of En.
With decent hours and satisfac. remun.
(They would have pleased the laz. and greed. of men)
Temptat. to which yours tru. is not immune.

But then it occ. to me that conservat.
Pat. Jenk.'s depart. finds not much to its taste;
They might req. me to find accommodat.
For steel contain. of danger. nucle. waste.
Thus most top jobs looked superfic. entic.
But roused suspic. on more mature consid.
So I determ. to mount my trusty bic.
And find employ. as old Tebb. Sen. once did.

PETER ALEXANDER

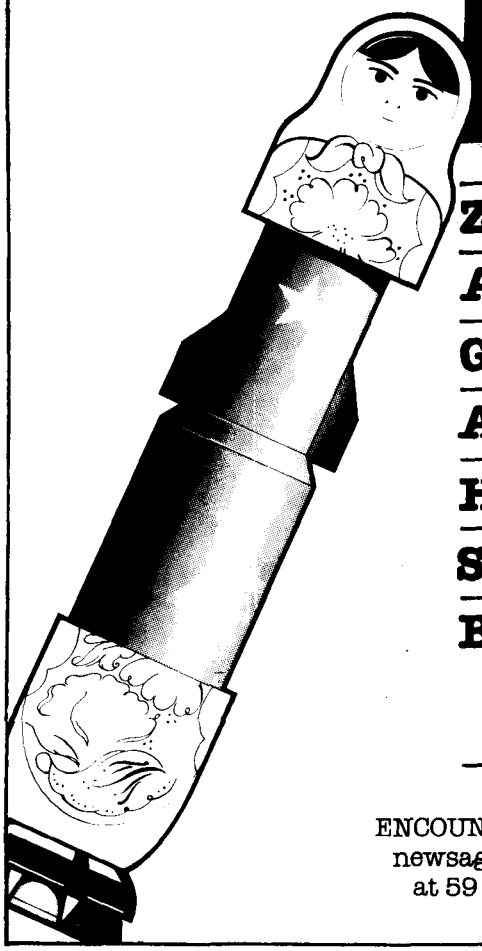
Whassat? You wanna win an N.S. Comp.?
'S a doddle! Right, O.K., I'll jog your mem.
If poss. you just abuse all things Soc. Dem.
But failing that, make like 2 Para. – yomp
All over English Lang. and Lit. Now me,
For inst., I spesh in puns and P. G. Wode.
(But Raymond Chan. and Mr. Poo. are good
As well). And be anon. – your nom de p.
Must be v. v. bizarre (say, 'X. Maspud');
That way you always *could* be Graham G.!

PETER NORMAN

How mis. a biz. this is!
How ill to kill a syll.!
Not prop. to drop and crop
And murd. each word – absurd!
My iliad's a shad.
Of hoped-for op., can't cope!
Imag. how trag. to badge.
And fooz., bambooz. my Muse!
A romp, this comp.; no pomp
And circs., all jerks. It irks.
These stunts affront, disgrunt.
From cursed terse verse, O merc.
This brev.'s the dev., too clev.!
Why squeeze to please? The reas.
Is on horiz. – a prize!
If won, Econ., begone!

MARGUERITE KENDRICK

THE COMP COMPLEX staff were saddened this week by news of the sudden death of P. W. R. Foot. Mr Foot had been a part of the NS Weekend Competition for over 25 years, providing not only frequent winning entries but also comment, information and suggestions for new competitions. We shall all miss him, and we offer our warmest sympathy to his family and friends.



ENCOUNTER

Zbigniew Brzezinski — **The Tragic Dilemma of Soviet World Power**

A.S. Byatt — **On the Day that E.M. Forster Died** — a new short story

George Watson — **Who are the Conservatives?**

Adam Michnik — **Letter from a Polish Prison**

H.J. Eysenck — **The Limits of Manipulation**

Sidney Hook — **The Incredible Story of Michael Straight**

Book Reviews — **David Cannadine** on Urban History, **John Grigg** on The Retreat from Empire, **David Miles** on Archaeology, **John Mole** on Recent Poetry.

This — and much more — in the "new-look" December issue of ENCOUNTER magazine. Out now at W.H. Smith, John Menzies and other good newsagents, £1.50. Or send £1.90 (USA $4.50, or $6.50 by air) to Encounter at 59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS and we'll gladly post you a copy.

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FIRST PERSON

Anne Smith

Rich bitch

TWO NEWS ITEMS recently swam into my ken on the same day. The first was that gas and electricity charges are to go up to enable the Chancellor to balance his budget. The second was that the Home Secretary (a straight-haired clone of the Chancellor, I reckon) was only prevented by 'more experienced hands' from saying frankly in his law 'n' order speech to the assembled automata at Blackpool that he would protect private property 'at any cost'. The connection is obvious: more pensioners will be required to freeze to death this winter so that second cars can rest securely in their garages at night.

Worse was to come. On the same day, an old lady from the rich South told me of a friend who had written to her bank manager that she 'couldn't have more income' and 'couldn't increase her capital', either, for fear the tax man would get his predatory hands on it. She'd already siphoned off the statutory tax-free £20,000 each to all her grandchildren, and she 'didn't believe in charity'.

Auberon Waugh, when he isn't moaning about comprehensives as if the education of the working class were a personal affront to himself, moans that his contribution to these uncouth yobs' dole money deprives him of the richly-deserved services of a second butler or under-parlourmaid or whatever. At least once a year – possibly when he has to fill in his tax return – he explains patiently to an audience of the converted (with this exception) in the *Spectator* how, if the wealth of the country were redistributed on socialist principles, nobody would be better off: the rich would simply be poorer.

I've read it so often that I begin to suspect he's trying to convince himself. He's certainly not convincing *me*. If the rich were squeezed till their pips squeaked, there would be less private property to protect, for a start. And to silence the 'only a penny each to the population' theorists, like Mr Waugh, the money thus acquired might be put to very specific purposes. For example, Getty's money could have provided a fully equipped nursery school for every town and village in the UK, and paid their overheads for years.

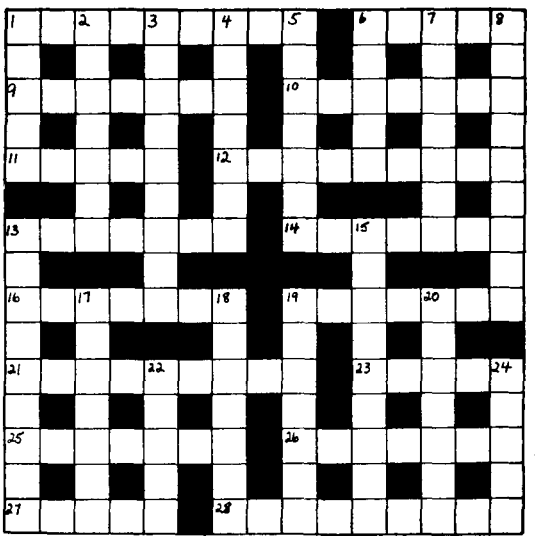
Simultaneously, a fair-minded Labour government with a social conscience and a grain of imagination might nationalise all the gambling and put the profits to specific uses. Wouldn't it be realistic to recycle the money that the weak-willed (like myself) spend on the nags, the dogs, the pools and the arcades, for their own good? Put it into education, and you'd halve the number of gamblers in a generation.

Provide equality of opportunity and you'd hardly have a gambler left (or *Express* reader, come to think of it). Deprivatise (I can't resist the word) education and put the gambling profits into schools, colleges and universities. That way, maybe the children of the laddie my father met at a slot-machine palace last week won't do what their father did, which was to put his entire dole money into an uncooperative machine, then go wretchedly to cadge a fag from a stranger.

I have already confessed in these columns, to the chagrin of at least one reader, the inadequacy of my grasp of my own financial affairs. Part of the problem, though, lies in a total inability to understand the way the financial affairs of the country are run. No cost is to be spared to protect Volvos and videos, while pensioners freeze; the NHS is falling apart, while we spend billions on weapons; nurseries close and libraries run down, while we play Space Invaders. Oh, I can recognise the pattern all right – a private individual displaying such a pronounced death wish would be committed to the laughing academy before he or she could lay hands on a razor blade – but I *cannot* understand it. □

Weekend Crossword 1422

PRIZES: £5 Book Tokens for the first three correct solutions opened. Entries to Crossword 1422, New Statesman, 14-16 Farringdon Lane, London EC1R 3AU, by first post 6 December.



Name_____

Address_____

ACROSS

1. Silk moth caught in a tangle and he makes it difficult to get out (9)
6. Undeveloped as one existing in ancient times (5)
9. The brilliant little thing has to go across with a broken leg (7)
10. Left back left for the river (7)
11. If she lost her head I'd be in employment (5)
12. Secrets may make the artillery commanding officer happy (9)
13. Excerpt consisting of a piece of writing about a fool (7)
14. Sleepers cured? (7)
16. Where thin wood is without honour (7)
19. Dogs start barking at the birds (7)
21. Sound which may make us grimace (9)
23. In the lido are dinghies equipped for rowing (5)
25. Succeed in it without a female (7)
26. Weigh heavily like the latest news after the street has been destroyed (7)
27. Stops short of a hundred and relaxes (5)
28. Demolished a second city in the action (9)

DOWN

1. Talks indistinctly and softly in Hampshire (5)
2. Forms with a large number of girls in (7)
3. Keep apart to greet sage in disguise (9)
4. Repeat within the hearing of the waiter at every opportunity (7)
5. Fish had somewhere to land (7)
6. Soldiers in the pub wearing less clothes (5)
7. People chase after Jack's place (7)
8. Weapons needed by spurned females (9)
13. Country which is the fairest in the east (9)
15. Fog makes one look intently around a dish (9)
17. Frontiers are the places for military activities (7)
18. The sod I broke and lifted up (7)
19. Plant which causes decline in insect population (7)
20. Can rely on reforming crime (7)
22. Tapestry town (5)
24. Back in the side so deputies are given medicine (5)

SETSQUARE

Solution to 1420

P	U	M	A	S	■	P	A	M	P	H	L	E	T	S
O	■	A	■	T	■	A	■	A	■	A	■	N	■	E
S	T	R	E	A	K	I	N	G	■	R	E	A	D	E
T	■	I	■	M	■	R	■	N	■	M	■	C	■	D
C	R	A	M	P	S	■	D	A	V	E	N	T	R	Y
A	■	■	■	E	■	S	■	C	■	D	■	M	■	■
R	E	D	A	D	M	I	R	A	L	■	H	E	R	M
D	■	E	■	E	■	D	■	R	■	E	■	N	■	U
S	I	T	E	■	P	E	N	T	A	M	E	T	E	R
■	■	E	■	M	■	L	■	A	■	E	■	■	■	D
B	A	R	B	A	R	I	C	■	B	R	I	D	L	E
I	■	M	■	T	■	G	■	A	■	G	■	E	■	R
G	R	I	S	T	■	H	O	R	S	E	R	A	C	E
H	■	N	■	E	■	T	■	K	■	N	■	L	■	R
T	H	E	O	R	I	S	T	S	■	T	I	T	U	S

Prizewinners to 1420

John E. Brown (Winscombe, Avon)
Mrs Dempsey (West Calder, W. Lothian)
Mrs R. A. Emmerson (Wysall, Notts)

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LISTINGS

SAT 26 NOVEMBER

WELWYN Annual Xmas Bazaar and Craft Fair for Welwyn, Hatfield Labour Party. 10am Woodhall Community Centre, Welwyn Garden City.

LONDON Fall-out Theatre 'The Galaxy's Guide to Survival' – facts and follies of nuclear arms race. 8pm Harmwood Community Centre, 1 Forge Pl, Ferdinand St, NW1. Tickets at door £1/50p unwaged. **Org. Camden Town CND, 6 Rousden St, NW1.**

FINSBURY PARK Community Action Group Bazaar and Public Meeting. 3pm Jack Ashley Bld, Blackstock Rd, N4. Food, crafts, bookstalls, creche, local politics. **Org. Finsbury Park Action Group.**

LONDON National Meeting of Lesbians in the Labour Party. 2pm County Hall. Creche. **Details Sarah Roelofs, Gays the Word bookshop, Marchmont St, WC1.**

LONDON Industry and the bomb, one day symposium 10am Royal Society of Medicine, 1 Wimpole St, W1. Fee incl. coffee/lunch £10/£5 nurses, students, unwaged. **Details Sir John Whitmore, Director of BIFIS, Southbank House, Black Prince Rd, SE1 7SJ 01-587 1630.**

SUN 27 NOVEMBER

LONDON Emma Tennant will be reading from *'Woman beware Woman'* 5pm Riverside Studios, Crisp Rd, W6. Adm. Free.

LONDON Week begins to focus attention on Central America. 'Nobody's Backyard – what is happening in El Salvador, Nicaragua and Guatemala?' Send SAE to 4 Replingham Rd, London, SW18.

NEWCASTLE Concert for El Salvador 7.30pm The Guildhall, Quayside. **Tickets £2/£1.25 unwaged from: The Bookhouse, Ridley Place, Days of Hope Bookshop, Newgate Street, Newcastle Side Gallery, the Side. By Post: Peter Brabban, Oxfam, 3rd floor, Bolbec Hall, Westgate Rd. Details: Newcastle 619888/611499 eves.**

MON 28 NOVEMBER

SHEEN 'Britain's Socialist Future' Spkr Tony Benn 8pm The Bull (corner of Upper Richmond Rd and Sheen La). **Org. Richmond and Barnes Labour Party, Starr House, 57 Church Rd, Richmond, Surrey.**

LONDON LSE Students' Union Anti-Racism Week begins with 'Racism and the Police' Spkr Cecil Gutzmore 1pm.

LONDON 'The Mind, Neuroscience and Life-Hopes' Inaugural Lecture by Prof Ted Honderich. 5.30pm Chemistry Auditorium, Christopher Ingold Laboratories, Gordon St, WC1. Adm. Free.

LONDON Crafts Fair for OXFAM at St James's Church, Piccadilly, W1. (Lasts all week Tues-Fri 10am-5.30pm, Mon & Sat 10am-7pm. Incls music and demonstrations of craft making in aid of Oxfam's work in Central America. Food/drink available. **Details: Jacquie Monty, Oxfam, 4 Replingham Rd, SW18 5LS 01-446 2176/01-874 9324.**

CARDIFF 'Is nuclear deterrence inherently wrong?' Spkr Mr Jeff McMahan. Workshop 3.15pm Humanities Building, Committee Rm, University College. 7.30pm Lectures 'Fortress Scotland, lessons for Wales' Spkr Malcolm Spaven. 'The Case for British nuclear disarmament' Spkr Jeff McMahan Welsh Centre for International Affairs, Temple of Peace, Cathays Park. **Org. Wales Inst for Peace Development, 26 Mackintosh Pl, Roath, Cardiff. 0222 485567.**

TUES 29 NOVEMBER

YORK Concert for El Salvador. Yolocamba I-Ta, Roy Bao ; ey. 7.30pm INL Club, Walmgate. Tickets £2.50/£1.50 unwaged from Arts Centre and Community Bookshop. **Org. S. Minta, Dept of English, University of York, Heslington, York YO1 5DD. 0904 59861.**

WED 30 NOVEMBER

LONDON 'Socialism of European Unity' Spkr Michael Newman 7.30pm 178 Whitechapel Rd, E1. **Org. Tower Hamlets Fabian Society.**

LONDON 'The Resistible Rise of Greta Vila' by Collin Martyr (runs until 3 Dec) Tom Aolen Centre, Grove Crescent Rd, Stratford, E15. A hilarious satire of Mrs Thatcher's rise to power. Tickets £2.50/£1 unwaged. **Details: Theatre Venture Pippa Gladhill 01-519 4645.**

EALING Public Meeting 'Grenada and Central America' Spkr Fennis Augustine, Grenadian High Commissioner. Film: 'El Salvador – Another Vietnam?' 7.30pm Acton Town Hall. Assisted Wheelchair access. **Org. Ealing/Acton Labour Party David Bays 01-992 0287.**

LONDON 'Bandits and Historians' Spkr Prof Eric Hobsbawn 1-2pm Chemistry Theatre, Birkbeck College, Malet St, WC1. Adm. Free.

LONDON 'Smash the show trials! No more informers!' Public Meeting 7.30pm Conway Hall (Small Hall) Red Lion Sq, WC1. **Org. Irish Solidarity Movement, BM Box 4835, WC1N 3XX.**

LONDON 'The international politics of drugs' – first of 3 lectures Weds 7pm Mary Ward Centre, 42 Queen Sq, WC1. **Org. Central London War on Want Des Atkinson 01-720 7864/01-831 7711.**

LONDON 'The Polish Crisis 1980-83' Spkr Dr Antony Polonsky, Reader in International History, LSE. 6.30pm (Entrance Donation 50p) **Qunamis at St. James's Church, Piccadilly, W1. 01-437 6851.**

LONDON Whitechapel Open Exhibition 1984. Any artist, amateur or professional, living or working in Tower Hamlets, Hackney, Southwark, Lewisham, Greenwich, Newham, City of London is eligible to submit work from 30 Nov-4 Dec. Application form and details of venues for submission of work, send 9 × 4 s.a.e. to **Clare Moore, Whitechapel Art Gallery, Whitechapel High St, E1 7QX 01-377 0107 between 10am-6pm.**

THURS 1 DECEMBER

MUSWELL HILL Medical Campaign's Visit to USSR to meet Soviet Health workers. Slides, Spkr Dr John Launer. 8pm Tetherdown Hall, Tetherdown, Muswell Hill, N10. Adm. Free. **Details: J. Morley 01-889 0571.**

LONDON 'Pedagogy of the Oppressors: some approaches to Political Education in a Multicultural Society'. 6-8pm Rm 642 Inst. of Education, 20 Bedford Way, WC1. Spkr Robin Richardson, Advisor, Berkshire LEA.

LONDON 'The black community' Spkr Winston Pinder, one of series of classes on Marxism in Britain 7.30-9.30pm Marx House, Clerkenwell Green, EC1.

LONDON 'Implementing the 1981 Education Act' Seminar and discn. led by John Welton, Lecturer in Educational Admin., University of London Inst. of Education. 5.30-7pm Rm 3B18, King's College, Strand, WC2. **Org. Politics, Education and Society Seminar Group, c/o 01-836 5454 × 2325.**

FRI 2 DECEMBER

LONDON Benefit Gig for Muswell Hill Youth CND. 8pm Jacksons Lane Community Centre, Archway Rd, N6. Tickets £1 at door. **Details: N. Rose 01-444 7970.**

HARROW Thatcher visits Harrow School for annual 'Songs Night'. Confront her about health and education cuts, local government plans, Cruise. Assemble 6.30pm Harrow Hill tube. Torchlight march with Jazz Band. Hilltop rally with Labour and TU spkrs, protest songs. Bring your own banners. Fill the Hill. **Contact: Bill 01-846 4259, Colin 01-861 1607, Dave 01-863 7258.**

LONDON Women and Religion 2-day conf. Goldsmiths' College, New Cross, SE14. **Details: Clodagh O'Reilly 01-692 7171.**

FORTHCOMING

3 DEC BLACKHEATH 'Alternatives to the Bomb' Spkr Sidney Hinkes. Book sale, Free tea. Rowland Hilder's Studio, 7 Kidbrooke Grove, SE3. **Org. Fellowship Party 01-836 6249.**

3 DEC LONDON Symposium 'The Years Ahead' Spkrs Chris Mullin, Barbara Rogers, Sheila Rowbotham, Peter Tatchell 1pm Council Chamber, Hornsey Town Hall, Crouch End Broadway, N8. Adm. 20p. **Details: Barbara Simon, Hornsey & Wood Green Labour Party, 01-348 6136.**

Sorry, but we can't accept entries over the phone. Entries must be received by Friday preceding issue date. We reserve the right to exclude items without giving reasons and are not responsible for errors. Space is strictly limited so if you definitely want your item to appear, we suggest you book it as an ad. under the appropriate classified heading. See main heading for rates, etc.

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THEOSOPHY: S.a.e. for free pamphlets, book list, programme of activities. Sunday 27 November 8 p.m. Informal Q/A Meeting. 'Reincarnation & Karma'. ULT, 62 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AL.

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GENEROUSLY PROPORTIONED, good-looking brunette, 5ft 11in, 36, busy, independent, literary, seeks older, taller, thinner, unattached, uncynical acad./prof. male to unwind with at weekends. Box 7065.

GRADUATE, MALE, 29, slim, affectionate, non-smoker, interested: media, wholefoods, country walking, rock music. Seeks similar lady to share life with. Cambridgeshire/travelling distance. Box 7064.

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MANCHESTER-BASED professional woman, 43, retains several original features, seeks man for sincere, lasting relationship. Box 7057.

MANCHESTER AREA, ordinary female seeks non-ordinary male, late 40s, teacher/widower. Box 7044.

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ONE TIME Beatnik, now 50s, bald, spiritual dossor working hard for something or other (but not religious – I know nothing of that absentee landlord) wishes for a female mate – shape, size, colour immaterial provided heart is distinctly heart-shaped. You to love me – me to love you. We'll be as good as angels, busy as bees, give our money to the hungry, our love to everyone and be as happy as honey-bears. You'll see! Things will be beautiful. We can marry if you like. I've no responsibilities – except love (which is why I go to work – used not to bother!). Write now! Box 7052.

OUTWARDLY INDEPENDENT but secretly romantic lady, 38, seeks knight in shining armour to rescue her from obscurity. Must be 6ft (dismounted). Wheeled transport preferred. Box 7028.

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PROLETARIAN MALE, 37, single, unemployed, N. West. Non-sexist, non-materialistic, seeks likewise female comrade for sincere lasting friendship. Anywhere. Box 7037.

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UNSPECTACULAR, UNATTACHED male, 28, quietly humorous, with caring, considerate nature, seeks warm lady, 25+, to share varied interests and happy relationship. S. London/-Croydon. Box 7059.

VIVACIOUS, LOVING, intelligent female whose interests include art, theatre and music, seeks professional male 50ish, needing affection and companionship. Essex/London/Kent most convenient. Box 7029.

WARM-HEARTED, personable, mature woman, seeks permanent mutual life enhancement, with educated, possibly affluent man, sharing interests: Bridge, golf, walking, books, gardening, town/country living. Late 50s+. Box 7025.

WEST INDIAN Government and Politics Researcher, seeks academic, unattached female, under 40, with interests in British and Colonial politics. Box 7045.

WOMAN, mid-thirties, NW3, likes reading, cinema, walking, theatre, enjoying myself, supports peace movement. Seeks new man, with humour and sensitivity for stable relationship. Box 7024.

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